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WHAT IS AND WHAT MIGHT BE

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WHAT IS AND WHAT MIGHT BE

A STUDY OF EDUCATION IN GENERAL AND ELEMENTARY EDUCATION IN PARTICULAR

BY
EDMOND HOLMES
AUTHOR OF
"THE CREED OF CHRIST," "THE CREED OF BUDDHA," "THE SILENCE OF LOVE," "THE TRIUMPH OF LOVE," ETC.

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PREFACE

My aim, in writing this book, is to show that the *externalism* of the West, the prevalent tendency to pay undue regard to outward and visible "results" and to neglect what is inward and vital, is the source of most of the defects that vitiate Education in this country, and therefore that the only remedy for those defects is the drastic one of changing our standard of reality and our conception of the meaning and value of life. My reason for making a special study of that branch of education which is known as "Elementary," is that I happen to have a more intimate knowledge of it than of any other branch, the inside of an elementary school being so familiar to me that I can in some degree bring the eye of experience to bear upon the problems that confront its teachers. I do not for a moment imagine that the elementary school teacher is more deeply tainted than his fellows with the virus of "Occidentalism." Nor do I think that the defects of his schools are graver than those of other educational institutions. In my judgment they are less grave because, though perhaps more glaring, they have not had time to become so deeply rooted, and are therefore, one may surmise, less difficult to eradicate. Also there is at least a breath of healthy

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discontent stirring in the field of elementary education, a breath which sometimes blows the mist away and gives us sudden gleams of sunshine, whereas over the higher levels of the educational world there hangs the heavy stupor of profound self-satisfaction.[1] I am not exaggerating when I say that at this moment there are elementary schools in England in which the life of the children is emancipative and educative to an extent which is unsurpassed, and perhaps unequalled, in any other type or grade of school.

I am careful to say all this because I foresee that, without a "foreword" of explanation, my adverse criticism of what I have called "a familiar type of school" may be construed into an attack on the elementary teachers as a body. I should be very sorry if such a construction were put upon it. No one knows better than I do that the elementary teachers of this country are the victims of a vicious conception of education which has behind it twenty centuries of tradition and prescription, and the malign influence of which was intensified in their case by thirty years or more[2] of Code despotism and "payment by results." Handicapped as they have been by this and other adverse conditions, they have yet produced a noble band of pioneers, to whom I, for one, owe what little I know about the inner meaning of education; and if I take an

[1] By "self-satisfaction" I mean satisfaction with the existing system *as a system*. That strenuous efforts are being made to improve the system, within its own limits, I can well believe. But the system itself, with the defects and limitations which are of its essence, seems to be regarded as adequate, and even as final, by nearly all who work under it.

[2] 1862 to 1895 A.D.

unduly high standard in judging of their work, the reason is that they themselves, by the brilliance of their isolated achievements, have compelled me to take it. I will therefore ask them to bear with me, while I expose with almost brutal candour the shortcomings of many of their schools. They will understand that all the time I am thinking of education in general even more than of elementary education, and using my knowledge of the latter to illustrate statements and arguments which are really intended to tell against the former. They will also understand that at the back of my mind I am laying the blame of their failures, not on them but on the hostile forces which have been too strong for many of them,—on the false assumptions of Western philosophy, on the false standards and false ideals of Western civilisation, on various "old, unhappy, far-off things," the effects of which are still with us, foremost among these being that deadly system of "payment by results" which seems to have been devised for the express purpose of arresting growth and strangling life, which bound us all, myself included, with links of iron, and which had many zealous agents, of whom I, alas! was one.

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PART I

WHAT IS

OR

THE PATH OF MECHANICAL OBEDIENCE

CHAPTER I

SALVATION THROUGH MECHANICAL OBEDIENCE

THE function of education is to foster growth. By some of my readers this statement will be regarded as a truism; by others as a challenge; by others, again, when they have realised its inner meaning, as a "wicked heresy." I will begin by assuming that it is a truism, and will then try to prove that it is true.

The function of education is to foster growth. The end which the teacher should set before himself is the development of the latent powers of his pupils, the unfolding of their latent life. If growth is to be fostered, two things must be liberally provided,—nourishment and exercise. On the need for nourishment I need not insist. The need for exercise is perhaps less obvious, but is certainly not less urgent. We make our limbs, our organs, our senses, our faculties grow by exercising them. When they have reached their maximum of development we maintain them at that level by exercising them. When their capacity for growth is unlimited, as in the case of our mental and spiritual faculties, the need for exercise is still more urgent. To neglect to exercise a given limb, or organ, or sense, or faculty, would result in its becoming weak, flabby, and in the last resort

useless. In childhood, when the stress of Nature's expansive forces is strongest, the neglect of exercise will, for obvious reasons, have most serious consequences. If a healthy child were kept in bed during the second and third years of his life, the damage done to his whole body would be incalculable.

These are glaring truisms. Let me perpetrate one more,—one which is perhaps the most glaring of all. The process of growing must be done by the growing organism, by the child, let us say, and by no one else. The child himself must take in and assimilate the nourishment that is provided for him. The child himself must exercise his organs and faculties. The one thing which no one may ever delegate to another is the business of growing. To watch another person eating will not nourish one's own body. To watch another person using his limbs will not strengthen one's own. The forces that make for the child's growth come from within himself; and it is for him, and him alone, to feed them, use them, evolve them.

All this is—

> "As true as truth's simplicity,
> And simpler than the infancy of truth."

But it sometimes happens that what is most palpable is least perceptible; and perhaps it is because the truth of what I say is self-evident and indisputable, that in many Elementary Schools in this country the education given seems to be based on the assumption that my "truisms" are absolutely false. In such schools the one end and aim of the teacher is to do everything for the child;—to feed

him with semi-digested food; to hold him by the hand, or rather by both shoulders, when he tries to walk or run; to keep him under close and constant supervision; to tell him in precise detail what he is to think, to feel, to say, to wish, to do; to show him in precise detail how he is to do whatever may have to be done; to lay thin veneers of information on the surface of his mind; never to allow him a minute for independent study; never to trust him with a handbook, a note-book, or a sketch-book; in fine, to do all that lies in his power to prevent the child from doing anything whatever for himself. The result is that the various vital faculties which education might be supposed to train become irretrievably starved and stunted in the over-educated school child; till at last, when the time comes for him to leave the school in which he has been so sedulously cared for, he is too often thrown out upon the world, helpless, listless, resourceless, without a single interest, without a single purpose in life.

The contrast between elementary education as it too often is, and as it ought to be if the truth of my "truisms" were widely accepted, is so startling that in my desire to account for it I have had recourse to a paradox. "Trop de vérité," says Pascal, "nous étonne: les premiers principes ont trop d'évidence pour nous." I have suggested that the inability of so many teachers to live up to the spirit, or even to the letter, of my primary "truism," may be due to its having too much evidence for them, to their being blinded by the naked light of its truth.

But there may be another explanation of the

singular fact that a theory of education to which the teacher would assent without hesitation if it were submitted to his consciousness, counts for nothing in the daily routine of his work. Failure to carry an accepted principle into practice is sometimes due to the fact that the principle has not really been accepted; that its inner meaning has not been apprehended; that assent has been given to a formula rather than a truth. The cause of the failure may indeed lie deeper than this. It may be that the nominal adherents of the principle are in secret revolt against the vital truth that is at the heart of it; that they repudiate it in practice because they have already repudiated it in the inner recesses of their thought. "This people draweth nigh unto me with their mouth, and honoureth me with their lips; but their heart is far from me." Tell the teacher that the function of education is to foster growth; that therefore it is his business to develop the latent faculties of his pupils; and that therefore (since growth presupposes exercise) he must allow his pupils to do as much as possible by and for themselves,—place these propositions before him, and the chances are that he will say "Amen" to them. But that lip assent will count for nothing. One's life is governed by instinct rather than logic. To give a lip assent to the logical inferences from an accepted principle is one thing. To give a *real* assent to the essential truth that underlies and animates the principle is another. The way in which the teacher too often conducts his school leads one to infer that the intuitive, instinctive side of him—the side that is nearest to practice—has somehow or other held

intercourse with the inner meaning of that "truism" which he repeats so glibly, and has rejected it as antagonistic to the traditional assumptions on which he bases his life. Or perhaps this work of subconscious criticism and rejection has been and is being done for him, either by the spirit of the age to which he belongs or by the genius of the land in which he lives.

Why is the teacher so ready to do everything (or nearly everything) for the children whom he professes to educate? One obvious answer to this question is that for a third of a century (1862–1895) the "Education Department" did everything (or nearly everything) for him. For a third of a century "My Lords" required their inspectors to examine every child in every elementary school in England on a syllabus which was binding on all schools alike. In doing this, they put a bit into the mouth of the teacher and drove him, at their pleasure, in this direction and that. And what they did to him they compelled him to do to the child.

So far as the action of the "Education Department" was concerned, this policy was abandoned —in large measure, if not wholly—in 1895; but its consequences are with us still. What conception of the meaning and purpose of education could have induced "My Lords" to adopt such a policy, and, having adopted it, to adhere to it for more than thirty years? Had one asked "My Lords" at any time during those thirty years what they regarded as the true function of education, and had one suggested to them (as they had probably never turned their minds to the question) that the

function of education was to foster the growth of the child, they might possibly have given an indolent assent to that proposition. But their educational policy must have been dictated by some widely different conception. They must have believed that the mental progress of the child—the only aspect of progress which concerned educationalists in those days—would best be tested by a formal examination on a prescribed syllabus, and would best be secured by preparation for such a test; and they must have accepted, perhaps without the consent of their consciousness, whatever theory of education may be implicit in that belief.

In acting as they did, "My Lords" fell into line with the Universities, the Public Schools, the Preparatory Schools, the Civil Service Commissioners, the Professional Societies, and (to make a general statement) with all the "Boards" and "Bodies" that controlled, directly or indirectly, the education of the youth of England. We must, therefore, widen the scope of our inquiry, and carry our search for cause a step farther back. How did the belief that a formal examination is a worthy end for teacher and child to aim at, and an adequate test of success in teaching and in learning, come to establish itself in this country? And not in this country only, but in the whole Western world? In every Western country that is progressive and "up to date," and in every Western country in exact proportion as it is progressive and "up to date," the examination system controls education, and in doing so arrests the self-development of the child, and therefore strangles his inward growth.

What is the explanation of this significant fact?

In my attempt to account for the failure of elementary education in England to foster the growth of the educated child, I have travelled far. But I must travel farther yet. The Western belief in the efficacy of examinations is a symptom of a widespread and deep-seated tendency,—the tendency to judge according to the appearance of things, to attach supreme importance to visible "results," to measure inward worth by outward standards, to estimate progress in terms of what the "world" reveres as "success." It is the Western standard of values, the Western way of looking at things, which is in question, and which I must now attempt to determine.

That I should have to undertake this task is a proof of the complexity of education, of the bewildering tanglement of its root-system, of the depths to which some of its roots descend into the subsoil of human life. The defect in our system of education which I am trying to diagnose is one which the "business man," who may have had reason to complain of the output of our elementary schools, will probably account for in one sentence and propound a remedy for in another. But I, who know enough about education to realise how little is or can be known about it, find that if I am to understand why so many schools turn out helpless and resourceless children, I must go back to the first principles of modern civilisation, or in other words to the cardinal axioms of the philosophy of the West.

This does not mean that I must make a systematic study of Western metaphysics. Professional

thinkers abound in the West; but the rank and file of the people pay little heed to them. It is true that they take themselves very seriously; but so does every clique of experts and connoisseurs. The indirect influence of their theories has at times been considerable; but their direct influence on human thought is, and has always been, very slight. For the plain average man, who cannot rid himself of the suspicion that the professional thinker is a professional word-juggler, has a philosophy of his own which was formulated for him by an unphilosophical people, and which, though it is now beginning to fail him, was once sufficient for all his needs.

At the present moment there are two schools of popular thought in the West. For many centuries there was only one. For many centuries men were content to believe that the outward and visible world—the world of their normal experience—was the all of Nature. But they were not content to believe that it was the "all of Being." The latter conception would have said "No" to certain desires of the heart which refuse to be negatived,—desires which are as large and lofty as they are pure and deep: and in order to provide a refuge for these, men added to their belief in a natural world which was bounded by the horizon of experience (as they understood the word), the complementary belief in a world which transcended the limits of experience, and in which the dreams and hopes for which Nature could make no provision might somehow or other be realised and fulfilled. With the development of physical science, the conception of the Supernatural has become discredited, and a

materialistic monism has begun to dispute the supremacy of that dualistic philosophy which had reigned without a rival for many hundreds of years. But antagonistic as these philosophies are to one another, they have one conception in common. The popular belief that the world of man's normal experience is the Alpha and Omega of *Nature*, is the very platform on which their controversies are carried on. Were any one to suggest to them that this belief was without foundation, that there was room and to spare in Nature for the "supernatural" as well as for the normal, that the supernatural world (as it had long been miscalled) was nothing more nor less than "la continuation occulte de la Nature infinie,"—they would at once unite their forces against him, and assail him with an even bitterer hatred than that which animates them in their own intestine strife.

The dualistic philosophy which satisfied the needs of the West for some fifteen centuries was systematised and formulated for it, in the language of myth and poetry, by an Eastern people. The acceptance of official Christianity by the Graeco-Roman world was the result of many causes, two of which stand out as central and supreme. The first of these was the personal magnetism of Christ, in and through which men came in contact with, and responded to, the attractive forces of those moral and spiritual ideas which Christ set before his followers. The second was the readiness of the Western mind to accept the philosophy of Israel, —a philosophy with the master principles of which it had long been subconsciously familiar, and for the clear and convincing presentation of which it

had long been waiting. Of the personal magnetism of Christ and the part that it has played in the life of Christendom, I need not now speak. My present concern is to show how the philosophy of Israel—accepted nominally for Christ's sake, but really for its own—has influenced the educational policy of the West.

In the Old Testament the Western mind found itself face to face with the philosophical theories—theories about the world and its origin, about Man and his destiny, about conduct and its consequences—to which its own mythologies had given inadequate expression, but which the poetical genius of a practical people was able to formulate to the satisfaction of a practical world. In the philosophy of Israel "Nature" was conceived of, not as animated by an indwelling life or soul, but as the handiwork of an omnipotent God. In six days—so runs the story—"God created the heavens and the earth." Whether by the word which we translate as "days" were meant terrestrial days or cosmic ages matters nothing, for in either case the broad fact remains that according to the Biblical narrative the work of creation occupied a definite period of time, and that on a certain day in the remote past the Creator rested from his labours, surveyed his handiwork, and pronounced it to be very good.

His next step was to stand aside from the world that he had made, leave it to its own devices and see how it would behave itself in the person of its lord and his viceroy,—Man. That the Creator should place Creation on its trial and that it should speedily misbehave itself, may be said to have been

preordained. The idea of a Creator postulates the further idea of a Fall. The finished work of an omnipotent Creator is presumably good,—good in this sense, if in no other, that its actualities must needs determine the creature's ideals and standards of good. But the world, as Man knows it, seems to be deeply tainted with evil. How is this anomaly to be accounted for? The story of the Fall is the answer to this question. Whether modern theology regards the story of the Fall as literally or only as symbolically true, I cannot say for certain. The question is of minor importance. What is of supreme importance is that Christian theology accepts and has always accepted the consequences of the *idea* of the Fall, and that in formulating those consequences it has provided the popular thought of the West with conceptions by which its whole outlook on life has been, and is still, determined and controlled.

The idea of the Fall, as dramatised by Israel and interpreted by the "Doctors" of the West, gives adequate expression—on the highest level of his thinking—to the crude dualism which constitutes the philosophy of the average man. Hence the immense attractiveness of the idea to the practical races of the West,—to peoples whose chief idea is to get their mental problems solved for them as speedily, as authoritatively, and as intelligibly as possible, that they may thus be free to devote themselves to "business," to the tangible affairs of life.

Let us follow the philosophy of the Fall into some of its more obvious consequences. The Universe (to use the most comprehensive of all

terms) is conceived of as divided into two dissevered worlds,—the world of Nature, which is fallen, ruined, and accursed, and the Supernatural world, which shares in the perfection and centres in the glory of God. Between these two worlds intercourse is, *in the nature of things*, impossible. But Man is not content that his state of godless isolation should endure for ever. As a thinker, he has exiled God from Nature and therefore from his own daily life. But, as a "living soul," he craves for reunion with God; and so long as the gulf between the two worlds remains impassable, his philosophy will be felt to be incomplete. A supplementary theory of things must therefore be devised. Corrupt and fallen as he is, Man cannot hope to climb to Heaven; but God, with whom nothing is impossible, can at his own good pleasure come down to earth. And come he will, whenever that sense of all-pervading imperfection which exiled him, in its premature attempt to explain itself, to his supernatural Heaven, is realised in man's heart as a desire for better things. But what will be the signs of his advent? The philosophy of the Fall is at no loss for an answer to this question. There was a time when Nature was the mirror of God's face. But it is so no longer. The mirror was shattered when Adam fell. Henceforth it is only by troubling the waters of Nature, by suspending the operation of its laws, by turning its order into confusion, by producing *supernatural* phenomena, or "miracles" as they are vulgarly called, that God can announce his presence to Man.

The question of the miraculous is one into which we need not enter. Let us assume that God can

somehow or other come to Man, and that Man can somehow or other recognise God's presence and interpret his speech. We have now to ask ourselves one vital question. With what purpose does God visit the world which has forfeited his favour, and what does he propose to do for ruined Nature and fallen Man? For Nature, nothing. For Man, to provide a way of escape from Nature. The dualism of popular thought must needs control the very efforts that men make to deliver themselves from its consequences. The irremediable corruption of Man's *nature* is the assumption on which the whole scheme of salvation is to be hinged. His deliverance from sin and death will be effected, not by the development of any natural capacity for good, but by his being induced to quit the path (or paths) of Nature, and to walk, under Divine direction, in some new and narrow path.

But how will this end be achieved? That Man cannot discover the path of salvation for himself will, of course, be taken for granted. The catastrophe of the Fall has corrupted his whole nature, and has therefore blinded him to the light of truth. "The way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." The promptings of his own nature, which he would follow if left to himself, can do nothing but lead him astray. It will also be taken for granted that the path of salvation is a path of action. When the whole inward disposition is hopelessly corrupt, the idea of achieving salvation by growing, by bringing one's hidden life to the perfection of maturity, must perforce be abandoned. It is only by *doing* God's will that Man can hope to regain

his favour. One thing, then, is clear. Man must be told in exact detail what he is to do and also (should this be necessary) how he is to do it. In other words, an elaborate Code of Law, covering the whole range of human life and regulating all the details of conduct, must be delivered by God to Man. If Man will obey this Law he will be saved. If he will not obey it, he will be lost.

There is another aspect of the idea of a supernatural revelation on which it is necessary to touch. As intercourse between Nature and the Supernatural world takes place, not in the natural order of things but at the good pleasure of the Supernatural God, revelation must needs be conceived of as a highly-specialised process. A revelation which was addressed to the whole human race, and to which the whole human race was able to respond, could scarcely be regarded as of supernatural origin. The distinction between the supernaturalness of the appeal and the naturalness of the response would gradually tend to efface itself: for "what is universal is natural," and the voice which every man was able to recognise would come at last to be regarded as a voice from within oneself. If the supernatural character of an alleged revelation is to be established, its uniqueness must be duly emphasised. A particular people must be chosen for the purpose of the divine experiment. A particular law-giver must be commissioned to declare to the chosen people the will of the Supernatural God. And from time to time a particular prophet must be sent to rebuke the chosen people for its backslidings, to show it where it has gone astray, and to exhort it to turn again to its God.

For if it is far from Man to discern good, it is still farther from him to desire it. How, then, shall he be induced to walk in the path which the Law has prescribed for him? To this question there can be but one answer: By the promise of external reward, and the threat of external punishment. To set before Man an ideal of life—an ideal which would be to him an unfailing fountain of magnetic force and guiding light—is not in the power of legalism. For if an ideal is to appeal to one, it must be the consummation of one's own natural tendencies; but the current of Man's natural tendencies is ever setting towards perdition, and the vanishing point of his heart's desires is death. Were an ideal revealed to the Law-giver and by him presented to his fellow-men, and were the heart of Man to respond to the appeal that it made to him, the basic assumption of legalism—that of the corruption of Man's nature—would be undermined; for Man would have proved that it belonged to his nature to turn towards the light,—in other words, that he had a natural capacity for good. The plain truth is that legalism is precluded by its own first principles from appealing to any motive higher than that instinctive desire for pleasure which has as its counterpart a quasi-physical fear of pain. It is impossible for the law-giver to appeal to Man's better nature, to say to him: "Cannot you see for yourself that this course of action is better than that,—that love is better than hatred, mercy than cruelty, loyalty than treachery, continence than self-indulgence?" What he can and must say to him is this, and this only: "If you obey the Law you will be rewarded.

If you disobey it you will be punished." And this he must say to him again and again.

It is true that among the many commandments which the Law sets before its votaries, there are some—the moral commandments, properly so called—which do in point of fact, and in defiance of the philosophical assumption of legalism, appeal to the better nature of Man. But these are at best an insignificant minority; and their relative importance will necessarily diminish with the development into its natural consequences of the root idea of legalism. For legalism, just so far as it is strong, sincere, and self-confident, will try to cover the whole of human life. The religion that is content to do less than this, the religion that acquiesces in the distinction between what is religious and what is secular, is, as we shall presently see, a religion in decay. Religion may perhaps be defined as Man's instinctive effort to bring a central aim into his life and so provide himself with an authoritative standard of values. In its highest and purest form, Religion controls Man's life, both as a whole and in all its essential details, through the central aim or spiritual ideal which it sets before him and the consequent standard of values with which it equips him. But legalism is debarred by its distrust of human nature from trying to control the details of life through any central aim or ideal; and its assumption that all the commandments of the Law are of divine origin, and therefore equally binding upon Man, is obviously incompatible with the conception of a standard of moral worth. Its attempt to cover the whole of life must therefore resolve itself into an attempt to control the details of conduct *in all*

their detail; to deal with them, one by one, bringing each in turn under the operation of an appropriate commandment, and if necessary deducing from the commandment a special rule to meet the special case. In other words, besides being told what he is not to do (in the more strictly moral sphere of conduct), and what he is to do (in the more strictly ceremonial sphere), Man must be told, in the fullest detail, how he is to do whatever may have to be done in the daily round of his life. Such at least is the aim of legalism. The nets of the Law are woven fine, and flung far and wide. If there are any acts in a man's life which escape through their clinging meshes, the force of Nature is to be blamed for this partial failure, not the zeal of the Doctors of the Law.

It is towards this inverted ideal that the doctrine of salvation through obedience will lead its votaries, when its master principle—that of distrust of human nature—has been followed out into all its natural consequences,—followed out, as it was by Pharisaism, with a fearless logic and a fixed tenacity of purpose. An immense and ever-growing host of formulated rules, not one in a hundred of which makes any appeal to the heart of Man or has any meaning for his higher reason, will crush his life down, slowly and inexorably, beneath their deadly burden. "At every step, at the work of his calling, at prayer, at meals, at home and abroad, from early morning till late in the evening, from youth to old age, the dead, the deadening formula"[1] will await him. The path of obedience for the sake of obedience speedily

[1] *The Jewish People in the time of Jesus Christ*, by Dr. Emil Schurer.

degenerates into the path of mechanical obedience; and the end of that path is the triumph of machinery over life.

For it is to the letter of the Law, rather than to the spirit, that the strict legalist is bound to conform. The letter of the Law is divine; and obedience to it is within the power of every man who will take the trouble to learn its commandments. What the spirit of the Law may be, is beyond the power of fallen Man to determine; and were an attempt made to interpret it, the result would be a state of widespread moral chaos, for there would be as many interpretations of it as there were minds that had the courage and the initiative to undertake so audacious a task. As it is with the Law as such, so it is with each of its numerous commandments. The man who professes to obey the spirit of a commandment is in secret revolt against its divine authority. For he is presuming to criticise it in the light of his own conscience and insight, and to limit his obedience to it to that particular aspect of it which he judges to be worthy of his devotion. From such a criticism of the Fourth Commandment as "the Sabbath is made for man, not man for the Sabbath" to open violation of the letter of the commandment (on this occasion or on that) there is but a single step. The whole structure of legalism would collapse if men were allowed to absolve themselves from obedience to the letter of the Law, out of regard for what they conceived to be its spirit. To interpret a commandment, in the sense of providing for its application to the fresh cases that may arise for treatment, is the work, not of poets and prophets

but of Doctors and Scribes. The path of literal, and therefore of mechanical, obedience is the only path of safety; and the more punctiliously the letter is obeyed, the more perfect will be the machinery of salvation, and the nearer will legalism get to the appointed goal of its labours,—the extinction of spiritual life.

As is the life that legalism expects us to lead, so is the scheme of rewards and punishments by which (as we have already seen) it constrains us to lead it. The materialisation of life that takes place under the sway of the Law is accurately matched and measured by the materialisation of the doctrine of moral retribution. The general idea that virtue is rewarded and vice punished is profoundly true. But the idea is easily misinterpreted; and it necessarily shares in the degradation of one's general conception of life. Virtue rewards the virtuous by making them more virtuous. Vice punishes the vicious by making them more vicious. So long as the rewards for which we hope and the punishments which we dread are conceived of as inward and spiritual, we are on safe ground. But such a scheme of rewards and punishments is wholly foreign to the genius of supernaturalism. It is not by becoming more virtuous that we are saved. It is not by becoming more vicious that we are lost. We are saved by obedience, we are lost by disobedience, to the formulated rules of a divinely-delivered law. To appeal to Man's higher self, when there is no higher self to appeal to,—to set before him as the supreme reward of virtue the development of his better nature, when his nature is intrinsically evil,—would

be an obvious waste of labour. And as, apart from the presumed repugnance of the "natural man" to the presumed delights of the Law, the intrinsic attractiveness of the life that legalism prescribes must needs diminish in exact proportion as the authority of the Law becomes oppressive and vexatious, and the letter of it tends to establish itself at the expense of the spirit,—it is clear that a scheme of rewards and punishments will become, in effect as well as in theory, the only weapon in the armoury of the legalist. It is also clear that there will be much work for that one weapon to do. The central tendencies of Man's nature, besides being *ex hypothesi* evil, are antagonistic *de facto* to the galling despotism and the irrational requirements of the Law; and the lawgiver, far from being able to enlist those tendencies under his banner by appealing to the highest of them —the natural leaders of the rest,—must be prepared to overcome their collective resistance by winning to his side the lowest of them, by terrifying Man's weaker self with threats, by corrupting his baser self with bribes. The ruin of Man's nature, whether hypothetical or actual,[1] has left intact (or relatively intact) only the animal base of it. It is to his animal instincts, then, that legalism must appeal in its endeavour to influence his conduct. In other words, the punishments and the rewards to which Man is to look forward must be of the same *genus*, if not of the same *species*,

[1] In its extreme form legalism tends to bring about that ruin of human nature which it starts by postulating; for, by forbidding Man's higher faculties to energise, it necessarily arrests their development, and so makes it possible for the lower faculties to draw to themselves an undue share of the rising sap of Man's life.

as the lash of the whip that punishes the lagging race-horse, or the lump of sugar that rewards his exertions. And with the inevitable growth of egoism and individualism in the demoralising atmosphere with which legalism (and its lineal successors) must needs invest human life, Man's conception of the rewards and punishments that await him will deteriorate rather than improve. The Jewish desire for national prosperity was an immeasurably nobler motive to action than is the Christian's fear of the quasi-material fires of Hell. Indeed it is nothing but our familiarity with the latter motive that has blinded us to its inherent baseness. It is no exaggeration to say that there have been epochs in the history of Christendom (as there are still quarters of Christian thought and phases of Christian faith) in which the trumpet-call that was meant to rouse the soldiers of God to renewed exertion has rung in their ears as an ignominious "*sauve qui peut.*"

The tendency of legalism to externalise life has another aspect. In the eyes of the strict legalist there is no such thing as an inward state of human worth. The doctrine of the corruption of Man's nature is incompatible with the idea of "goodness" being measurable (potentially if not actually) in terms of the health and happiness of the "inward man." Goodness, as the legalist conceives it, is measurable in terms of correctness of outward conduct, and of that only. And when life is regulated by an elaborate Law, the rules of which are familiar to all men, there is no reason why a man's outward conduct should not be appraised, with some approach to accuracy, by his neighbours and friends. Hence it is that in the atmosphere of

legalism an excessive deference is wont to be paid to public, and even to parochial, opinion. The life of the votary of the Law is lived under strict and constant *surveillance;* and a man learns at last to value himself as his conduct is valued by a critical onlooker, and to make it the business of his life to produce "results" which can be weighed and measured by conventional standards, rather than to grow in grace,—with silent, subtle, unobtrusive growth.

Were I to try to prove that the *régime* of the Law was necessarily fatal to the development of Man's higher faculties—conscience, freedom, reason, imagination, intuition, aspiration, and the rest—I should waste my time. Legalism, as a scheme of life, is based on the assumption that development along the lines of Man's nature is a movement towards perdition; and to reproach the legalist for having arrested the growth of the human spirit by the pressure of the Law were to provoke the rejoinder that he had done what he intended to do. The two schemes of Salvation—the mechanical and the evolutional—have so little in common that neither can pass judgment on the other without begging the question that is in dispute. When I come to consider the effect of legalism—or rather of the philosophy that underlies legalism—on education, I may perhaps be able to find some court of law in which the case between the two schemes can be tried with the tacit consent of both. Meanwhile I can but note that in the atmosphere of the Law growth is as a matter of fact arrested,—arrested so effectually that the counter process of degeneration begins to take its place. The proof of this statement, if

proof be needed, is that legalism, when its master principle has been fully grasped and fearlessly applied, takes the form of Pharisaism, and that it is possible for the Pharisee to "count himself to have apprehended," to congratulate himself on his spiritual achievement, to believe, in all seriousness, that he has closed his account with God.

Pharisaism is at once the logical consummation and the *reductio ad absurdum* of legalism. It is to the genius of Israel that we owe that practical interpretation of the fundamental principle of supernaturalism, which was embodied in the doctrine of salvation through obedience to the letter of a Law. And it is to the genius of Israel that we owe that rigorously logical interpretation of the *axiomata media* of legalism, which issued in due season in Pharisaism. The world owes much to the courage and sincerity of Israel,—to his unique force of character, to his fanatical earnestness, to his relentless tenacity of purpose. In particular, it owes a debt which it can never liquidate to what was at once the cause and the result of his over-seriousness,—to his lack of any sense of humour,—a negative quality which allowed his practical logic to run its course without let or hindrance, and prevented the "brakes" of common-sense from acting when he found himself, in his very zeal for the Law, descending an inclined plane into an unfathomable abyss of turpitude and folly. The man (or people) who is able, of his own experience, to tell the rest of mankind what a given scheme of life really means and is really worth, owing to his having offered himself as the *corpus vile* for the required experiment, is one of the greatest benefactors of the human race. Had Israel been

less sincere or less courageous, we might never have known what deadly fallacies lurk in the seemingly harmless dualism of popular thought.

But the West, it will be said, is Christian, not Jewish. Is it Christian? If the word "Christian" connotes acceptance of the teaching as well as devotion to the person of Christ, it is scarcely applicable either to the official or to the popular religion of the West. For Christ, the stern denouncer of the Pharisees, was the whole-hearted enemy of legalism; and the legal conception of salvation through mechanical obedience still dominates the religion and life of Christendom.

The Jewish Law tried to cover, and tended more and more to cover, the whole of human life. It is true that it controlled the details rather than the totality of life; but the reason why it dealt with life, detail by detail, was that its exponents, owing to their spiritual purblindness, were unable to see the wood for the trees. In Christendom, while the doctrine of salvation through mechanical obedience was retained, the authority of a Church was substituted for that of a Code of Law. The growth of the idea of Humanity, as opposed to that of mere nationality, made this necessary. As the former idea began to compete with the latter, the need for a divinely-commissioned society which should declare the will and communicate the grace of God, not to one nation only but to all men who were willing to hearken and obey,—and whose action, as a channel of intercourse between God and Man, should be continuous rather than spasmodic,—began to make itself felt. A Code of Law

might conceivably suffice to regulate the life of one small nation; but when we consider under what varying conditions of climate, occupation, custom, tradition, and so forth, the general life of Humanity is carried on, we see clearly that no one Code can even begin to suffice for the needs of the whole human race. Hence, and for other reasons which we need not now consider, the West, in accepting the philosophy of Israel, translated its master idea of salvation through mechanical obedience into the notation of ecclesiastical, as distinguished from legal, control.

That obedience to a supernaturally-commissioned Church, or rather to the One supernaturally-commissioned Church, is the first and last duty of Man, is the fundamental assumption on which the stately fabric of Catholic Christianity has been reared. In various ways the Church has striven to exact implicit obedience from her children. Through the medium of the Confessional she has secured some measure of control over their morals. By regulating the worship of God—both public and private—she has been able to rule off a sphere of human conduct in which her own authority is necessarily paramount. By supplying the faithful with rations of "theological information" (to quote the apt phrase of a pillar of orthodoxy), and requiring them to accept these on her authority as indisputably true, she has succeeded in imposing her yoke on thought as well as on conduct. By claiming to control the outflow of Divine grace, through the channels of the Sacraments, she has been able to threaten the rebellious with the dread penalty of being cut off from intercourse with God.

And by telling men, with stern insistence, that the choice between obedience and disobedience to herself is the choice between eternal happiness and eternal misery, she has sought to extend her dominion beyond the limits of time and to raise to an infinite power her supremacy over the souls of men.

But just because the life of collective Humanity is large, complex, and full of change and variety, the Church which aspires to be universal, however strong may be her desire to superintend all the details of human thought and conduct, and however ready she may be to adapt herself to local and temporal variations, must needs allow whole aspects and whole spheres of human life to escape from her control. The history of Christendom is the history of the gradual emancipation of the Western world from the despotism of the Church. The various activities of the human spirit—art, science, literature, law, statecraft, and the rest—have, one and all, freed themselves by slow degrees from ecclesiastical control, till little or nothing has been left for the Church to regulate but her own rites and ceremonies, the morals (in a narrow and ever-narrowing sense of the word), and the faith (in the theological sense of the word), of the faithful.

With the emancipation of Man's higher activities from ecclesiastical control, the distinction between the *religious* and the *secular* life has gradually established itself. That this should happen was inevitable. Mechanical obedience being of the essence of supernatural religion, the secularising of human life became absolutely necessary if any vital progress was to be made. The

Church patronised art, music, and the drama so far as they served her purposes. When they outgrew those purposes, in response to the expansive forces of human nature, she treated them as secular and let them go their several ways. In the interests of theology she tried to keep physical science in leading-strings; but when, after a bitter struggle, science broke loose from her control, she treated it too as secular and let it go its way.

Let us see what this distinction involves. As salvation is to be achieved by obedience to the Church and in no other way, it follows that in all those spheres of life which are outside the jurisdiction of the Church (except, of course, so far as questions of "morals" may arise in connection with them), Man's conduct and general demeanour are supposed to have no bearing on his eternal destiny. This is the view of the secular life which is taken by the Church. And not by the Church alone. As, little by little, the Institution—be it Church, or Sect, or Code, or Scripture —which claims to be the sole accredited agent of the Eternal God, relaxes its hold upon the ever-expanding life of Humanity, all those developments of human nature which cease to be amenable to its control come to be regarded as mundane, as unspiritual, as carnal, as matters with which God has no concern.

Were this view of the secular life confined to those who call themselves religious, no great harm would be done. Unfortunately, the secular life, which is under the influence of the current conception of God as one who holds no intercourse with Man except through certain accredited agents, is

ready to acquiesce in the current estimate of itself as godless, and to accept as valid the distinction between the religious life and its own. Hence comes a general lowering of Man's aims. As the secular life is content to regard itself as godless, and so deprives itself of any central and unifying aim, it is but natural that success in each of its many branches should come to be regarded as an end in itself. It is but natural, to take examples at random, that the artist should follow art for art's sake, that the man of science should deify positive knowledge, that the statesman should regard political power as intrinsically desirable, that the merchant and the manufacturer should live to make money, and that the highest motive which appeals to all men alike should be the desire to bulk large in the eyes of their fellow-men. Even the ardent reformer, whose enthusiasm makes him unselfish, pursues the ideal to which he devotes himself, as an end in itself, and makes no attempt to define or interpret it in terms of its relation to that supreme and central ideal which he ought to regard as the final end of human endeavour. When we remind ourselves, further, that secularism, equally with supernaturalism, tends to identify "Nature" with lower nature—in other words, with the material side of the Universe and the carnal side of Man's being,—we shall realise how easy it is for the secular life, once it has lost, through its divorce from religion, the tonic stimulus of a central aim, to sink, without directly intending to do so, into the mire of materialism,—a materialism of conduct as well as of thought.

But if the loss to the secular life, from its com-

pulsory despiritualisation, is great, the loss to religion, from the secularisation of so much of Man's rational activity, is greater still. The very distinction between the secular and the religious life is profoundly irreligious, in that it rests on the tacit assumption that there is no unity, no central aim, in human life; and the fact that official religion is ready to acquiesce in the distinction, is ready, in other words, to make a compromise with its enemy "the world," is a proof that it is secretly conscious of its own failing power, and is even beginning to despair of itself. As it resigns itself to this feeling (as yet perhaps but dimly realised), its reasons for entertaining it must needs grow stronger. The progressive enlargement of the sphere of Man's secular activities is accompanied, step for step, by the devitalisation of the idea of the Divine. What kind of intercourse can God be supposed to hold with Man if the latter is to be left to his own devices in what he must needs regard as among the more important aspects of his life,—in his commercial and industrial enterprises, in his art, in his literature, in his study of Nature's laws, in his mastery of Nature's forces, in his pursuit of positive truth and practical good? As in these matters Man frees himself, little by little, from the yoke of supernaturalism, which he has been accustomed to identify with religion, his formal conception of his relation to God and of the part that God plays in his life—the conception that is defined and elucidated for him by religious "orthodoxy"—becomes of necessity more irrational, more mechanical, more unreal, more repug nant to his better nature and to the higher

developments of his "common-sense." The tendency to exalt the letter of what is spoken or written, at the expense of the spirit, is as much of the essence of ecclesiasticism as of legalism. "*Si dans les règles du salut le fond l'emporterait sur la forme, ce serait la ruine du sacerdoce.*" And, as a matter of experience, the hair-splitting puerilities of Pharisaism under the Old Dispensation have been matched, and more than matched, in the spheres of ritual, of dogmatic theology, and of casuistical morality, under the New. As Man gradually shifts the centre of gravity of his being from the religious to the secular side of his life, this puerile element in religion—the element of ultra-formalism, of irrationality, of unreality—tends, like a morbid growth, to draw to itself the vital energies of what was once a healthy organism but is now degenerating into a "body of death." If, in these days of absorbing secular activity, Man continues to tolerate the theories and practices of the religious experts, the reason is—apart from the influence of custom and tradition and of his respect for venerable and "established" institutions—that they are things which he has neither time nor inclination to investigate, and which he can therefore afford to tolerate as being far removed from what is vital and central in his life. I am told that the Catholic Church holds, in the case of a dying man, "that the eternal fate of the soul, for good or for evil, may depend upon the reception or the non-reception of absolution, and even of extreme unction." That the truly appalling conception of God which is implicit in this sentence should still survive, that it should not yet have been swept out of exist-

ence by the outraged common-sense and good feeling of Humanity, is a proof of the immense indifference with which the Western world, absorbed as it is in secular pursuits, regards religion.

It may indeed be doubted if men have ever been so non-religious as are at the present day the inhabitants of our highly-civilised and thoroughly-Christianised West. At any rate the absence of a central aim in human life has never been so complete as it is now. Most men are content to drift through life, toiling for the daily bread which will enable them to go on living, yet neither knowing nor caring to know why they are alive. There is a minority of stronger and more resolute men who devote life with unwavering energy to the pursuit of what I may call private and personal ends. Thus the man of business lives for the acquisition of riches; the scholar and the scientist, of knowledge; the statesman, of power; the speculator, of excitement; the libertine, of pleasure; and so forth. Few are they who ever dream of devoting life as a whole to the pursuit of an end which is potentially attainable by all men, and which is therefore worthy of Man as Man. The idea of there being such an end has indeed been almost wholly lost sight of. Those among us who are of larger discourse than the rest and less absorbed by personal aims, ask themselves mournfully: What is the meaning of life? Why are we here? Is life worth living? and other such questions; and being unable to answer them to their satisfaction, or get them answered, resign themselves to a state of quasi-stoical endurance. That religion cannot

be expected to answer these questions—the very questions which it is its right and its duty to answer —seems to be taken for granted by all who ask them. Religion, as it is now conceived of, is a thing for priests and ministers, for churches and chapels, for Sundays and Saints'-days, for the private devotions of women and children, for educational debates in Parliament, for the first lesson on the time-table (9.5 to 9.45 a.m.) of a Public Elementary School. The "unbeliever" is eager to run a tilt against religion. The "non-believer" is content to ignore it. The "believer" is careful to exclude it from nine-tenths of his life. It is to this pass that the gospel of salvation by machinery has brought the most "progressive" part of the human race.

The phase of non-religiousness through which the West is passing has, we may rest assured, a meaning and a purpose. At the meetings of the Catholic Truth Society it is customary for the speakers to deplore the steady relapse of Christendom into paganism, which is going on before their eyes. As the Church had things her own way for ten centuries or more, these complaints on the part of her champions are equivalent to a confession on her part of disastrous failure. Why is the Church, after having evangelised the West and ruled it for a thousand years, allowing it to slide back into paganism? The answer to this question is that she herself is unwittingly paganising it. I mean by this that, without intending to do so, she is compelling it to choose between secularised life and arrested growth. Were a growing tree encircled with an iron band, the day would surely

come when the tree, by the force of its own natural expansion, would either shatter the band or allow it to cut deep into its own stem. The growing consciousness of Humanity has long been encircled by a rigid and inadequate conception of God. The gradual secularisation of the West means that the soul of man is straining that particular conception of God to breaking-point: and it is infinitely better that it should be broken to pieces than that its iron should be allowed to sink deep into the soul.

The secularisation of contemporary life means this, and more than this. It means the gradual handing back of Man's life to the control of Nature, —of Nature which is as yet unequal to the task that is being set it, owing to its having been through all these centuries identified with its lower self, taught to distrust itself, and otherwise misinterpreted and mismanaged, but which, in obedience to the primary instinct of self-preservation, will gradually rise to the level of the responsibility that is being laid upon it. With the further secularisation of Man's life, the need for religion to make effective the control of Nature, by pointing out to it its own ideal and so co-ordinating and organising all its forces, will gradually make itself felt, and the regeneration of religion will at last have begun.

For many centuries the current of religious belief in the West was almost entirely confined to the one channel of Catholic Christianity. There the mighty river pursued his course, "brimming and bright and large," till the time came when, with the gradual loss of his pristine energy—

> "Sands began
> To hem his wintry march, and dam his streams
> And split his currents";

Side channels were formed, and grew in number; and though Catholicism is still the central channel for the moving waters, the river has now fallen on evil days, and "strains along," "shorn and parcelled," like the river of the Asian desert—

> "forgetting the bright speed he bore
> In his high mountain cradle."

Of the many side streams into which Western Christianity has split, the majority may be spoken of collectively as Protestant. Protestantism claims to have liberated a large part of Christendom from the yoke of Rome; and it is therefore right that we should ask ourselves in what sense and to what extent it has brought freedom to the human spirit. The answer to this question is, I think, that though Protestantism has fought a good fight for the *principle* of freedom, it has failed—for many reasons, the chief of which is that it began its work before men were ripe for freedom—to lead its votaries into the path of spiritual life and growth. Confronted by the uncompromising dogmatism of Rome, it had to devise a counter dogmatism of its own in order to rally round it the faint-hearted who, though eager to absolve themselves from obedience to the despotism of the Church, yet feared to walk by their own "inward light." In making this move, which was not the less false because it was in a sense inevitable, Protestantism may be said to have renounced its mission. That it has done much, in various ways, for human

progress is undeniable; but the fact remains that it has failed to revitalise Christianity. Its masterstroke in its struggle with priestcraft—the substitution of "faith" for "works" as the basis of salvation—has done little or nothing to relieve the West from the deadly pressure of Israel's philosophy. For faith, as Protestantism understands the word, is the movement of the soul, not towards the ideal end of its being but towards an alleged supernatural transaction,—the redemption of the world by the death of Christ on the Cross. Gratitude to Christ for his love and self-sacrifice may indeed be an effective motive to action, but faith in the efficacy of Christ's atoning sacrifice is no guide to conduct. The inability of Protestantism to deduce a scheme of life from its own master-principle of salvation by "faith" has compelled it, in its desire to avoid the pitfalls of antinomianism, to revive in a modified form the practical legalism of the Old Testament. The Protestant desires to show his gratitude to Christ by leading a correct life; but his distrust of his own higher nature compels him to go to some external authority for ethical guidance; and as he has repudiated the authority of the supernaturally-inspired Church, he is compelled to have recourse to the supernaturally-inspired Bible. Hence the traditional alliance between Protestantism and the Old Testament, in which the path of duty is far more clearly and consistently defined than in the New. And hence the singular fact that Calvinism, which is the backbone of Protestantism, and which in theory, and even (at times) in practice, regards "works" as "filthy rags," finds its other self in Puritanism,

which is in the main a recrudescence of Jewish legalism in the more strictly *moral* sphere of conduct.

It is owing to its alliance with the legalism of Israel, that Protestantism has been in some respects an even greater enemy of human freedom than Catholicism, and has on the whole done more than the latter to narrow and maim human life. The strict legalist tries, as we have seen, to bring the whole of human life under the direct control of the Law; and when he finds, as the Puritan did in the sixteenth and seventeenth centureis, that whole aspects of life have in point of fact escaped from the control of religion and won from the latter a tacit acceptance of themselves as secular, he not unnaturally tends to regard these non-religious aspects of life as "carnal," and therefore as unacceptable to God. Hence the antipathy of the Protestant, in his seasons of Puritanical fanaticism, to art, music, the drama, and other noble fruits of the human spirit. Catholicism has found itself compelled to tolerate the secular activities of the layman; Protestantism, while tolerating those activities by which man earns his daily bread and which may be spoken of collectively as "business," has from time to time waged war against all the developments of human nature which are neither spiritual (in the narrow and rigid sense of the word) nor obviously useful, and has sought to extirpate the corresponding desires from the heart of Man. On the more artistic side of human life, it has done as much to impede the growth of the soul as Catholicism has done on the more intellectual side; and through its influence on character

it has done as much to harden the fibre of the soul as Catholicism has done to relax it, the tendency of both religions being to destroy that elasticity of fibre which mediates between hardness and flabbiness, and which has its counterpart in vigorous health and strength.

The truth is—but it is a truth which Protestantism is apt to misinterpret, and which Catholicism finds it expedient to ignore—that religion is not a branch or department of human life, but a way of looking at life as a whole. Indeed, it is of the essence of religion (as has been already suggested) that it should look at life as a whole, and so be able to look at each of its details in the light of that supreme synthesis which we call Divine. And the religion which sanctions, and by its own action necessitates, the division of life into two branches—the secular and the religious—has obviously missed its destiny and betrayed its trust.

A brief summary of the contents of this chapter will prepare the way for the next. The movements of higher thought in the West have been dominated, nominally by the professional thinker, really by the average man. As a thinker, the average man is incurably dualistic. Enslaved as he is to the requirements of his instrument, language, he instinctively opposes mind to body, spirit to matter, good to evil, the Creator to the Creation, God to Man; and in each case he fixes a great gulf between the "mighty opposites" that constitute the given antithesis. Confronted by the mystery of existence, he has explained it by the story of Creation. Confronted by the twin

mysteries of sin and sorrow, he has explained them by the story of the Fall. From the story of the Fall he has passed on to the doctrine of original sin, to the belief that Nature in general, and human nature in particular, is corrupt and ruined, and therefore intrinsically evil. Shrinking from the hopeless prospect which this belief opens up to him, he has found refuge in the conception of another world,—of a world above and beyond Nature, a world of Divine perfection from which information and guidance can at God's good pleasure be doled out to Man. For a "supernatural revelation" (as theologians call this sending of help from God to Man) special instruments are obviously needed,—a special People, a special Scripture, a special Lawgiver, a special Prophet, a special Church. Hence has arisen the idea that certain persons, certain castes, certain institutions have a monopoly of Divine truth and grace, and are therefore in a position to dictate to their fellowmen how they are to bear themselves if they wish to be "saved," what they are to believe, what they are to do. From this the transition has been easy to the further idea that salvation is to be achieved by blind and mechanical obedience,—by renouncing the right to follow one's own higher nature, to obey one's own conscience, to use one's own reason, to map out one's own life. In order to induce men to yield the obedience which is required of them, their lower instincts have had to be appealed to (for the higher, ruined by the Fall, have presumably ceased to operate),—their desire for pleasure by the promise of Heaven, their fear of pain by the threat of Hell. And in order that

their lives may be kept under close supervision and their merits accurately appraised, an ever-increasing stress has had to be laid on what is outward, visible, and measurable in human life, as distinguished from what is inward and occult,—on correctness in the details of prescribed conduct, or again in the details of formulated belief. As the idèa of salvation through mechanical obedience develops into a systematised scheme of life, the higher and more spiritual faculties of Man's nature become gradually atrophied by disuse. In other words, the channel of soul growth—the only channel that leads to spiritual health, and therefore to "salvation"—becomes gradually obstructed, with the result that the vital energies of the soul tend either to dissipate themselves and run to waste, or to make new channels for themselves,—channels of degenerative tendency, the end of which is spiritual death.

CHAPTER II

EDUCATION THROUGH MECHANICAL OBEDIENCE

THE God of popular theology has been engaged for more than thirty centuries in educating his child, Man. His system of education has been based on complete distrust of Man's nature. In the schools which Man has been required to attend—the Legal School under the Old Dispensation, the Ecclesiastical School under the New—it has been taken for granted that he can neither discern what is true, nor desire what is good. The truth of things has therefore been formulated for him, and he has been required to learn it by rote and profess his belief in it, clause by clause. His duty has also been formulated for him, and he has been required to perform it, detail by detail, in obedience to the commandments of an all-embracing Code, or to the direction of an all-controlling Church.

It has further been taken for granted that Man's instincts and impulses are wholly evil, and that "Right Faith" and "Right Conduct" are entirely repugnant to his nature. In order to overcome the resistance which his corrupt heart and perverse will might therefore be expected to offer to the authority and influence of his teachers, a scheme of rewards and punishments has had to be devised for his benefit. As there is no better nature for the scheme to appeal to, an appeal has had to be made to fears

and hopes which are avowedly base. The refractory child has had to be threatened with corporal punishment in the form of an eternity of torment in Hell. And he has had to be bribed by the offer of prizes, the chief of which is an eternity of selfish enjoyment in Heaven,—enjoyment so selfish that it will consist with, and even (it is said) be heightened by, the knowledge that in the Final Examination the failures have been many and the prize-winners few.

And as, under this system of education, obedience is the first and last of virtues, so self-will—in the sense of daring to think and act for oneself—is the first and last of offences. It is for the sin of spiritual initiative—the sin of trying to work out one's own salvation by the exercise of reason, conscience, imagination, aspiration, and other spiritual faculties—that the direst penalties are reserved. The path of salvation is the path of blind, passive, mechanical obedience. To deviate even a little from that path is to incur the penalty of eternal death.

As Man is educated by his father, God, so must the child be educated by his father, the adult man. If the nature of Man is intrinsically evil, the child must needs have been conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. If Man, even in his maturity, cannot be trusted to think or desire or do what is right, still less can he be so trusted when he is that relatively immature and helpless being, the child. If the adult man has to be told in the fullest detail (whether by a formulated Law or by a living Church) how he is to conduct himself, still greater

is the need for such or similar direction to be given to the child. If the adult is to be "saved" by strict and mechanical obedience, and by no other method, still greater is the need for such obedience on the part of the child. If a system of external and quasi-material rewards and punishments is indispensable in the education of the adult, still less can it be dispensed with in the education of the child. These *a fortiori* arguments are strong; but there is a stronger. The child will develop into the adult, and he cannot too soon be initiated into the life which, as the adult, he will have to lead. The process of educating the child is not merely analogous to the process of "saving" the man. It is a vital part of it. For childhood is the time when human nature is most easily moulded; and the bent that is given to it then is, in nine cases out of ten, decisive of its ultimate destiny.

It is clear, then, that if Man is to be "saved" by a *régime* of mechanical obedience, his education in his childhood must be based on the same general conception of life and duty. This means, in the first place, that the child must be brought up in an atmosphere of severity. The God of the Old Testament—the Deity whose *nimbus* overshadows the life of the West—combines in his own person the functions of law-giver, governor, prosecutor, judge, and executioner. His subjects are a race of vile offenders, whose every impulse is bad, and whose nature turns towards evil as inevitably as a plant turns towards the light. As he cannot trust them to know good from evil, he has had to provide them with an elaborate code of law; and he has had to take for granted that, left to themselves, they will

break his commandments, and find pleasure in doing so. From the very outset, then, his attitude towards them has been one of suspicion and rising anger. He is always on the look-out for disobedience, and he is ready to chastise the offender almost before he has had time to commit the offence. His pupils, brought up in an atmosphere of suspicion, and taught from their earliest days to disbelieve in and condemn themselves, can scarcely be blamed for living *down* to the evil reputation which they have unfortunately gained. To persuade a man that he is a miserable sinner is to go some way towards leading him into the path of sin. Systematic distrust paralyses and demoralises those who live under it, and so tends to justify the cruelty into which it too readily develops. The penalties which God has attached to the sins which he may almost be said to have provoked Man to commit, are so terrible and unjust that if the fear of them has not robbed life of all its sunshine, the reason is that their very horror has numbed Man's imagination, and made it impossible for him even to begin to picture to himself their lurid gloom.

In the West men have loyally striven to reproduce towards their children the supposed attitude of their God of Wrath towards themselves. From very tender years the child has been brought up in an atmosphere of displeasure and mistrust. His spontaneous activities have been repressed as evil. His every act has been looked upon with suspicion. He has been ever on the defensive, like a prisoner in the dock. He has been ever on the alert for a sentence of doom. He has been cuffed, kicked,

caned, flogged, shut up in the dark, fed on bread and water, sent hungry to bed, subjected to a variety of cruel and humiliating punishments, terrified with idle—but to him appalling—threats. In his misery he has shed a whole ocean of tears, —the salt and bitter tears of hopeless grief and helpless anger, not the soul-refreshing tears which are sometimes distilled from sorrow by the sunshine of love. But of all the cruelties to which he has been subjected, the most devilish has been that of making him believe in his own criminality, in the corruption of his innocent heart. In the deadly shade of that chilling cloud, the flower of his opening life has too often withered before it has had time to expand. For what is most cruel in cruelty is its tendency to demoralise its victims, especially those who are of tender years—to harden them, to brutalise them, to make them stubborn and secretive, to make them shifty and deceitful, to throw them back upon themselves, to shut them up within themselves, to quench the joy of their hearts, to numb their sympathies, to cramp their expansive energies, to narrow and darken their whole outlook on life. All this the cruelty of his seniors would do to the child, even if he had not been taught to believe in his own inborn wickedness. But that belief, with which he has been indoctrinated from his earliest days, necessarily weakens his power of resisting evil, and so predisposes him to fall a victim to the malignant germs that cruelty sows in his heart. We tell the child that he is a criminal, and treat him as such, and then expect him to be perfect; and when our misguided education has begun to deprave him, we shake our heads over

his congenital depravity, and thank God that we believe in "original sin."[1]

In the next place, if Man is to be faithful to his model, he must bring up the child in an atmosphere of vexatious interference and unnatural restraint. That Man himself has been brought up in such an atmosphere in both his schools—the Legal and the Ecclesiastical—I need not take pains to prove. What he has suffered at the hands of his Schoolmaster—the God of Israel (and of Christendom)—he has taken good care to inflict on his pupil, the child. Such phrases as: "Don't talk," "Don't fidget," "Don't worry," "Don't ask questions," "Don't make a noise," "Don't make a mess," "Don't do this thing," "Don't do that thing," are ever falling from his lips. And they are supplemented with such positive instructions as: "Sit still," "Stand on the form," "Hold yourself up," "Fold arms," "Hands behind backs," "Hands on heads," "Eyes on the blackboard." At every turn—from

[1] I mean by the words "original sin" what the plain, unsophisticated, believing Christian means by them. A modern poet, in a moment of impulsive orthodoxy, praises Christianity because it

"taught original sin,
The corruption of man's heart . . ."

This definition is sufficiently accurate. "Original sin," says the Ninth Article of the Anglican Church, ". . . is the fault and corruption of the Nature of every man . . . whereby man is of his own nature inclined to evil . . . and therefore, in every person born into the world, it deserveth God's wrath and damnation." How far the popular interpretation of the doctrine of original sin coincides with the latest theological refinement of the doctrine, I cannot pretend to say. When it finds it convenient to explain things away, theology, like Voltaire's Minor Prophet, "est capable de tout"; and the need for reconciling the doctrine of original sin with the teaching of modern science has in recent years laid a heavy tax on its ingenuity.

infancy till adolescence, "from early morning till late in the evening"—these "dead and deadening formulæ" await the unhappy child. The aim of his teachers is to leave nothing to his nature, nothing to his spontaneous life, nothing to his free activity; to repress all his natural impulses; to drill his energies into complete quiescence; to keep his whole being in a state of sustained and painful tension. And in order that we may see a meaning and a rational purpose in this *régime* of oppressive interference, we must assume that its ultimate aim is to turn the child into an animated puppet, who, having lost his capacity for vital activity, will be ready to dance, or rather go through a series of jerky movements, in response to the strings which his teacher pulls.

It is the inevitable reaction from this state of tension which is responsible for much of the "naughtiness" of children. The spontaneous energies of the child, when education has blocked all their lawful outlets, must needs force new outlets for themselves,—lawless outlets, if no others are available. The child's instinct to live will see to that. It sometimes happens that, when the channel of a river has been blocked by winter's ice, the river, on its awakening in Spring, will suddenly change its course and carve out a new channel for itself, reckless of the destruction that it may cause, so long as an outlet can by any means be found for its baffled current. It is the same with the river of the child's expanding life. The naughtiest and most mischievous boy not infrequently develops into a hero, or a leader of men. The explanation of this is that through his very naughtiness the current of soul-growth, which ran stronger in him

than in his school-mates, kept open the channel which his teachers were doing their best to close. Even Hooliganism—to take the most serious of the periodic outbursts of juvenile criminality—resolves itself, when thoughtfully considered, into a sudden and violent change in the channel of a boy's life, a change which is due to the normal channel (or channels) of his expansive energies having been blocked by years of educational repression. His wild, ruffianly outrages are perhaps the last despairing effort that his vital principle makes to assert itself, before it finally gives up the struggle for active existence.

When severity and constraint have done their work, when the spirit of the child has been broken, when his vitality has been lowered to its barest minimum, when he has been reduced to a state of mental and moral serfdom, the time has come for the system of education through mechanical obedience to be applied to him in all its rigour. In other words, the time has come for Man to do to the child, what the God whom he worships is supposed to have done to him,—to tell him in the fullest and minutest detail what he is to do to be "saved," and to stand over him with a scourge in his hand and see that he does it. In the two great schools which God is supposed to have opened for Man's benefit, freedom and initiative have ever been regarded (and with good reason) as the gravest of offences. Literal obedience has been exacted by the Law; blind obedience by the Church; passive obedience—the obedience of a puppet, or at best of an automaton—by both. The need for this

insistence on the part of Law and Church is obvious. If any lingering desire to think things out for himself, if any intelligent interest in what he was taught, survived in the disciple, the whole system of salvation by machinery would be in danger of being thrown out of gear.

As it has been, and still is, in the schools which God has opened for Man, so it has been, and still is, in the schools which Man has opened for the child. Blind, passive, literal, unintelligent obedience is the basis on which the whole system of Western education has been reared. The child must distrust himself absolutely, must realise that he is as helpless as he is ignorant, before he can begin to profit by the instruction that will be given to him. His mind must become a *tabula rasa* before his teacher can begin to write on it. The vital part of him—call it what you will—must become as clay before his teacher can begin to mould him to his will.

The strength of the child, then, is to sit still, to listen, to say "Amen" to, or repeat, what he has heard. The strength of the teacher is to bustle about, to give commands, to convey information, to exhort, to expound. The strength of the child is to efface himself in every possible way. The strength of the teacher is to assert himself in every possible way. The golden rule of education is that the child is to do nothing for himself which his teacher can possibly do, or even pretend to do, for him. Were he to try to do things by or for himself, he would probably start by doing them badly. This is not to be tolerated. Imperfection and incorrectness are moral defects; and the child must

as far as possible be guarded from them as from the contamination of moral guilt. He must therefore trust himself to his teacher, and do what he is told to do in the precise way in which he is told. His teacher must stand in front of him and give such directions as these: "Look at me," "See what I am doing," "Watch my hand," "Do the thing this way," "Do the thing that way," "Listen to what I say," "Repeat it after me," "Repeat it all together," "Say it three times." And the child, growing more and more comatose, must obey these directions and ask no questions; and when he has done what he has been told to do, he must sit still and wait for the next instalment of instruction.

What is all this doing for the child? The teacher seldom asks himself this question. If he did, he would answer it by saying that the end of education is to enable the child to produce certain outward and visible results,—to do by himself what he has often done, either in imitation of his teacher, or in obedience to his repeated directions; to say by himself what he has said many times in chorus with his class-mates; to disgorge some fragments of the information with which he has been crammed; and so forth. What may be the value of these outward results, what they indicate, what amount or kind of mental (or other) growth may be behind them,—are questions which the teacher cannot afford to consider, even if he felt inclined to ask them. His business is to drill the child into the mechanical production of quasi-material results; and his success in doing this will be gauged in due course by an "examination,"—a periodic test which is designed to measure, not the degree

of growth which the child has made, but the industry of the teacher as indicated by the receptivity of his class.

The truth is that inward and spiritual growth, even if it were thought desirable to produce it and measure it, could not possibly be measured. The real "results" of education are in the child's heart and mind and soul, beyond the reach of any measuring tape or weighing machine. It follows that if the work of the teacher is to be tested, an external test must be applied. This means that external results, results which can be weighed and measured, must be aimed at by both teacher and child, and that the value of these as symbols of what is inward and intrinsic must be wholly ignored. Not that the inward results of education would in any case be seriously considered. When education is based on the passivity of the child, nothing matters to him or to his teacher except the accuracy with which he can reproduce what he has been taught,—can repeat what he has been told, or do by himself what he has been told how to do. What connection there may be between these achievements and his mental state matters so little that the bare idea of there being such a connection is, as a rule, entirely lost sight of. The externalisation of religion in the West, as evidenced by its ceremonialism and its casuistry, has faithfully mirrored itself in the externality of Western education. The examination system (which I will presently consider) keeps education in the grooves of externality, and drives those grooves so deep as to make escape from them impossible. Yet it does but give formal recognition to, and in so doing

crown and complete—as the keystone crowns and completes the arch—the whole system of education in the West. It is because what is outward and visible counts for everything in the West, first in the life of the adult and then in the life of the child, that the idea of weighing and measuring the results of education—with its implicit assumption that the real results of education are ponderable and measurable (a deadly fallacy which now has the force and authority of an axiom)—has come to establish itself in every Western land.

The tendency of the Western teacher to mistake the externals for the essentials of education, and to measure educational progress in terms of the "appearance of things," gives rise to many misconceptions, one of the principal of which is the current confusion between information and knowledge. To generate knowledge in his pupils is a legitimate end of the teacher's ambition. In schools and other "academies" it tends to become the chief, if not the sole, end; and, things being what they are, the teacher may be pardoned for regarding it as such. But what is knowledge? The vulgar confusion between knowledge and information is the accepted answer to this question. But the answer is usually given before the question has been seriously considered. One who allowed himself to reflect on it, however briefly or cursorily, would quickly realise that it is possible to have intimate and effective knowledge of a subject without being able to impart any information about it. Successful action, as in arts, crafts, games, sports, and the like, must needs have subtle and accurate

knowledge behind it; but the possessor of such knowledge is seldom able to impart it with any approach to lucidity. On the other hand, it frequently happens that one who has a retentive memory is able to impart information glibly and correctly, without possessing any real knowledge of the subject in question.

The truth is that knowledge, which may perhaps be provisionally defined as a correct attitude towards one's environment, has almost as wide a range as that of human nature itself. At one end of the scale we have the quasi-animal instinct which governs successful physical action. At the other end we have the knowledge, of which, and of the possession of which, its possessor is clearly conscious. Between these extremes there is an almost infinite series of strata, ranging through every conceivable degree of subconsciousness. The knowledge that is real and effective is absorbed into one or more of the subconscious strata, from which it gradually ascends, under the influence of attention and reflection, towards the more conscious levels, gaining, as it ascends, in scope and outlook what it may possibly lose in subtlety and nearness to action. When knowledge, after passing upwards through many subconscious strata, rises to what I may call the surface-level of consciousness, it is ready, on occasion, to give itself off as information. This exhalation from the surface of consciousness is genuine information, not to be confounded with knowledge, to which it is related as the outward to the inward state, still less to be confounded with that spurious information which floats, as we shall presently see, like a film on the surface of the mind,

meaning nothing and indicating nothing except that it has been artificially deposited, and that in due season it will be skimmed off, if the teacher's hopes are fulfilled, for the delectation of an examiner.

There are, of course, many cases in which the conscious acquisition of information is a necessary stage in the acquisition of knowledge. But in all such cases, if the information acquired is to have any educative value, it must be allowed to sink down into the subconscious strata, whence, after having been absorbed and assimilated and so converted into knowledge, it will perhaps reascend towards the surface of the mind, just as the leaves which fall in autumn are dragged down into the soil below, converted into fertile mould, and then gradually lifted towards the surface; or as the fresh water that the rivers pour into the sea has to be slowly absorbed into the whole mass of salt water before it (or its equivalent) can return to the land as rain. When information which has been received and assimilated rises to the surface of the mind, it will be ready, when required to do so, to reappear as information, and perhaps to return in that form to the source from which it came. But the information which is given off will differ profoundly from that which has been received, for between the two will have intervened many stages of silent absorption and silent growth.

It may be necessary, then, in the course of education, both to supply and to demand information. But the information which is supplied must be regarded as the raw material of knowledge, into which it is to be converted by a subtle and secret process. And the information which is demanded

must be regarded as an exhalation (so to speak) from the surface of a mind which has been saturated with study and experience, and therefore as a proof of the possession of knowledge. To assume that knowledge and information are interchangeable terms, that to impart information is therefore to generate knowledge, that to give back information is therefore to give proof of the possession of knowledge,—is one of the greatest mistakes that a teacher can make.

But the mistake is almost universally made. Information being related to knowledge, as what is outward to what is inward, it is but natural that education in the West, which on principle concerns itself with what is outward, and ignores what is inward, should have always regarded, and should still regard, the supplying of information as the main function of the teacher, and the ability of the child to retail the information which has been supplied to him as a convincing proof that the work of the teacher has been successfully done. In nine schools out of ten, on nine days out of ten, in nine lessons out of ten, the teacher is engaged in laying thin films of information on the surface of the child's mind, and then, after a brief interval, in skimming these off in order to satisfy himself that they had been duly laid. He cannot afford to do otherwise. If the child, like the man, is to be "saved" by passive obedience, his teacher must keep his every action and operation under close and constant supervision. Were the information which is supplied to him allowed to descend into the subconscious strata of his being, there to be dealt with by the secret, subtle, assimilative processes of his nature, it would

escape from the teacher's supervision and therefore from his control. In other words, the teacher would have abdicated his function. He must therefore take great pains to keep the processes by which the child acquires knowledge (or what passes for such) as near to the surface of his mind as possible; in rivalry of the nurse who should take so much interest in the well-being of her charges that she would not allow them to digest the food which she had given them, but would insist on their disgorging it at intervals, in order that she might satisfy herself that it had been duly given and received. It is no doubt right that the teacher should take steps to test the industry of his pupils; but the information which the child has always to keep at the call of his memory, in order that he may give it back on demand in the form in which he has received it, is the equivalent of food which its recipient has not been allowed to digest.

The confusion between information and knowledge lies at the heart of the religion, as well as of the education, of the West. In this, as in other matters, the training of the child by his teacher has been modelled on the supposed training of Man by God. It is scarcely an exaggeration to say that the whole scheme of salvation by mechanical obedience is pivoted on the assumed identity of information and knowledge. In both the schools which Man has attended three things have always been taken for granted. The first is that salvation depends upon right knowledge of God. The second, that right knowledge of God and correct information about God are interchangeable phrases. The third, that correct information about God is

procurable by, and communicable to, Man. From these premises it has been inferred that if Man can be duly supplied with correct information about God, and can be induced to receive and retain it, he will be able to "save his soul alive." The difference between the two schools is, that in the Legal School the information supplied to Man has been largely concerned with the *Will* of God, so far as it bears on the life of Man, and has therefore taken the form of a Code of formulated commandments; whereas in the Ecclesiastical School it has mainly been concerned with the *Being* of God, as interpreted from his doings and especially from his dealings with Man, and has therefore taken the form of catechisms and creeds. And there is, of course, the further difference that in the Legal School Man's acceptance of what he is taught has taken the *practical* form of doing what he is told to do, detail by detail; whereas in the Ecclesiastical School it has been mainly *oral* (though also partly ceremonial), the business of the disciple being to commit to memory the creed or catechism which has been placed in his hands, and recite it, formula by formula, with flawless accuracy. But the difference between the two schools is wholly superficial, being, in fact, analogous to that between the conventional teaching of Drawing, in which the pupil finds salvation in doing what he is told to do, line by line, and stroke by stroke, and the conventional teaching of History and Geography, in which the pupil finds salvation in saying what he is told to say, name by name, and date by date.

The relation between the two great branches of education, the education of Man by God, and the

education of the child by the man, is one, not of analogy merely, but also of cause and effect. It is because the Jew thought to "save his soul alive" by obeying, blindly and unintelligently, a multitude of vexatious rules, that the teacher of to-day thinks to educate his pupils in Drawing by telling them in the fullest detail (either in his own person or by means of a diagram) what lines and strokes they are to make. And it is because the Christian has thought to "save his soul alive" by reciting with parrot-like accuracy the formulæ of his creeds and catechisms, that the teacher of to-day thinks to educate his pupils in History and Geography by making them repeat from memory a series of definitions, dates, events, names of persons, names of places, articles of commerce, and the like. I do not say that the modern teacher consciously imitates his models; but I say that he and they have been inspired by the same conception of life, and that the influence of that conception has been, in part at least, transmitted by them to him.

That education in the West should ultimately be controlled by a system of formal examination, may be said to have been predestined by the general trend of religious thought and belief. Wherever literal obedience is regarded as the first, if not the last, condition of salvation, the tendency to measure worth and progress by the outward results that are produced will inevitably spring up and assert itself. In this tendency we have the whole examination system in embryo. When Israel, with characteristic thoroughness, had embodied in Pharisaism

the logical inferences from his religious conceptions, a merciless examination system came into being, in which every one was at once examiner and examinee, and in which the whole of human life was dragged out (as far as that was possible) into the fierce light of public criticism, and placed under vigilant and unintermittent supervision. When Pharisaism was revived, with many modifications but with no essential change of character, under the name of Puritanism, the tendency to arraign human life at the bar of public opinion reasserted itself, and gave rise, as in New England and covenanting Scotland, to an intolerable spiritual tyranny. In Catholic countries the believer is subjected in the Confessional to a periodical oral examination, in which he passes in review the outward aspect of his inward and spiritual life, detailing for the benefit of his confessor his sins of ceremonial omission or laxity, and such lapses from moral rectitude as admit of being formulated in words and accurately valued in terms of expiatory penance. Even in the Anglican Church, which has too great a regard for the Englishman's traditional love of personal freedom to be unduly inquisitorial, the clergyman is apt to measure the spiritual health and progress of his parishioners by the frequency with which they attend church and "Celebration," while the Bishop measures the spiritual health and progress of each parish by the number of its communicants and the frequency with which they communicate, statistics under both heads being (I am told) regularly forwarded to him from all parts of his diocese.

It was inevitable, then, the relation between

religion and education being what it was and is, that sooner or later the education of the young should come under the control of a system of formal examination, and that it should be as much easier to apply the system to education than to religion as it is easier to test knowledge (in the conventional sense of the word) than conduct. It is to the vulgar confusion between knowledge and information that we owe the formal examination, as it is now conducted in most Western countries. In a society which mistakes the externals for the essentials of life, it is but natural that the teacher, with the full consent of the parents of his pupils, should regard the imparting of knowledge as the end and aim of his professional life, and that the parents should demand some guarantee that knowledge has been successfully imparted to their children. If by knowledge were meant a correct attitude of mind, the teacher would realise that the idea of testing it in any way which would satisfy the average parent was chimerical; and his clients, if they continued to ask for a guarantee of successful teaching, would require something widely different from that which has hitherto contented them. But when information is regarded as the equivalent of knowledge, the testing of the teacher's work becomes a simple matter, for it is quite easy to frame an examination which will ascertain, with some approach to accuracy, the amount of information that is floating on the surface of the child's mind; and it is also easy to tabulate the results of such an examination,—to find a numerical equivalent for the work done by each examinee, and then arrange the whole class in what is known as the "order of merit," and

accepted as such, without a moment's misgiving, by all concerned.

Unfortunately, however, it is equally easy to prepare children for an examination of this, the normal type. As children have receptive memories, it is easy for the teacher to lay films of information on the surface of their minds. As they have capacious and fairly retentive memories, it is easy for the teacher, especially if he is a strict disciplinarian, to make his pupils retain the greater part of what they have been taught. To skim off and give back to the teacher (or examiner) portions of the floating films of information, is a knack which comes with practice, and which the average child easily acquires. The teacher will, of course, demand that his school shall be examined on a clearly-defined syllabus; and the examiner, in his own interest, will gladly comply with this demand. The examiner will go further than this. If he happens to be employed by the State or by a Local Authority, and has, therefore, many schools of the same type to examine, he will, in order to save himself unnecessary trouble, prescribe the syllabus on which all the schools in his area are to be examined. This means that he will dictate to the teacher what subjects he is to teach, how much ground he is to cover in each year (or term), in what general order he is to treat each subject, and on what general principles he is to teach it. Intentionally he will do all this. Unintentionally he will do far more than this. As he wishes his examination to be a test and not a mere formality, as he wishes to sift the examinees and not to set the seal of approval on all of them indiscriminately, he will

take care that some at least of his questions are different from what the teacher might expect them to be. Also, as he is himself a rational being, he will probably endeavour to test intelligence as well as memory; and, with this end in view, he will set questions, the precise nature of which it will be difficult for the teacher to forecast. But the teacher will make a practice of studying the questions set in the periodical examinations and of preparing his pupils accordingly, equipping them (if he is an expert at his work) with a stock of superficial intelligence as well as of information, and putting them up to whatever knacks, tricks, and dodges will enable them to show to advantage on the examination day. In his desire to outwit the teacher, the examiner will turn and double like a hare who is pursued by a greyhound. But the teacher will turn and double with equal agility, and will never allow himself to be outdistanced by his quarry.

The more successful the teacher is in keeping up with the examiner, the more fatal will his success be to his pupils and to himself. In the ardour of the chase he is being lured on into a region of treacherous quicksands; and the longer he is able to maintain the pursuit, the more certain is it that he will lose himself at last in depths and mazes of misconception and delusion. It is only by stripping himself of his own freedom and responsibility that the teacher is able to keep pace with the examiner, and each turn or double that he makes involves a fresh surrender of those prerogatives. In consenting to work on a prescribed syllabus he has given up the idea of planning out his work for himself. In attempting to adapt

his teaching to the questions set by the examiner, he is allowing the latter to dictate to him, in the minutest detail, how each subject is to be taught. In other words, in order to achieve the semblance of success, he is delivering himself, mind and soul, into the hands of the examiner, and compelling the latter, perhaps against his will, to become a Providence to him and to order all his goings. This means that his distrust of himself is as complete as his distrust of the child, and that his faith in the efficacy of mechanical obedience has led him to seek salvation for himself, as well as for his pupils, by following that fatal path.

It is in this way that a formal examination reacts upon and intensifies the sinister tendencies of which it is at once a product and a symptom. The examination system is, as I have said, the keystone of the arch of Western education, crowning and completing the whole structure, and at the same time holding it together, and preventing it from falling, as it deserves to fall, into a ruinous heap. Education, as it is now interpreted and practised in the West, could not continue to exist without the support of the examination system; but the price that it pays, and will continue to pay, for this deadly preservative, is the progressive aggravation of all its own inherent defects. The plight of an organism is indeed desperate when the very poison which it ought, if healthy, to eliminate from its system, has become indispensable to the prolongation of its life.

It is notorious that the application of the examination principle to religion—the attempt to estimate spiritual health and growth in terms of

outward action—generates hypocrisy, or the pretence of being more virtuous (and more religious) than one really is. When applied to the education of the young, the same principle generates hypocrisy of another kind,—the pretence of being cleverer than one really is, of knowing more than one really knows. So long as the hypocrite realises that he is a hypocrite, there is hope for him. But when hypocrisy develops into self-deception, the severance between outward and inward, between appearance and reality, is complete. In a school which is ridden by the examination incubus, the whole atmosphere is charged with deceit. The teacher's attempt to outwit the examiner is deceitful; and the immorality of his action is aggravated by the fact that he makes his pupils partners with him in his fraud. The child who is being crammed for an examination, and who is being practised at the various tricks and dodges that will, it is hoped, enable him to throw dust in the examiner's eyes, may not consciously realise that he and his teacher are trying to perpetrate a fraud, but will probably have an instinctive feeling that he is being led into crooked ways. If he has not that feeling, if the crooked ways seem straight in his eyes, we may know that his sense of reality is being poisoned by the vitiated atmosphere which he has been compelled to breathe. Nor, if that is his case, will he lack companionship in his delusion. In the atmosphere of the examination system, deceit and hypocrisy are ever changing into self-deception; and all who become acclimatised to the influence of the system—pupils, teachers, examiners, parents, employers of labour, ministers of religion, mem-

bers of Parliament, and the rest—fall victims, sooner or later, to the poison that infects it, and are well content to cheat themselves with outward and visible results, accepting "class-lists" and "orders of merit" as of quasi-divine authority, mistaking official regulations for laws of Nature, and the clumsy movements of over-elaborated yet ill-contrived machinery for the subtle processes of life.

Of the many evils inherent in Western education, which the examination system tends to intensify, one of the greatest is that of starving the child's activities, of making him helpless, apathetic, and inert. Original sin finds its equivalent, in the sphere of mental action, in original impotence and stupidity. It is not in the child to direct his steps, and the teacher must therefore direct them for him, and, if necessary, support him with both hands while he makes them. Even if the outward results which are the goal of the teacher's ambition were to be produced for his own satisfaction only, he would take care to leave as little as possible to the child's independent effort. But when the results in question have to satisfy an examiner, and when, as may well happen, the teacher's own professional welfare depends on the examiner's verdict, it is but natural that he should hold himself responsible for every stroke and dot that his pupil makes. When the education given in a school is dominated by a periodical examination on a prescribed syllabus, suppression of the child's natural activities becomes the central feature of the teacher's programme. In such a school the child is not allowed to do anything which the teacher can possibly do for him. He has to think what his

teacher tells him to think, to feel what his teacher tells him to feel, to see what his teacher tells him to see, to say what his teacher tells him to say, to do what his teacher tells him to do. And the directions given to him are always minute. Not the smallest room for free action is allowed him if his teacher can possibly help it. Indeed, it is the function of the skilful teacher to search for such possible nooks and crannies, and fill them up. It is true that if an examination is to be passed with credit some thinking has to be done. But the greater part of this thinking must be done by the teacher, the *rôle* of the pupil, even when he is an adult student, being essentially passive and receptive. The pupil must indeed be actively passive and industriously receptive; but for the rest, he must as far as possible leave himself in the teacher's hands. How to outwit the examiner is the one aim of both the teacher and the examinee; and as the teacher is presumably older, wiser, and far more skilful at the examination game than his pupil, the duty of thinking—of planning, of contriving, and even (in the deeper sense of the word) of studying—necessarily devolves on the former; and the latter, instead of relying upon himself and learning to use his own wits and resources, becomes more and more helpless and resourceless, and gradually ceases to take any interest in the work that he is doing, for its own sake, his chief, if not his sole, concern being to outwit the examiner and pass a successful examination. (One frequently meets with clever University students who, having read a certain book for a certain examination and had no question set from it, regard the time

given to the study of it as wasted, and have no compunction about expressing this opinion!) If these are evils incidental—I might almost say essential—to the examination of adult scholars, it stands to reason that they will be greatly aggravated when the examinees are young children. For the younger the child, the more ignorant and helpless he is (however full he may be of latent capacity and spontaneous activity), and therefore the more ready he is to lean upon his teacher and to look to him for instruction and direction.

The desire to outwit, and so win approval from, an examiner, is not the only reason why the teacher so often reduces to an absurdity the traditional distrust of the child. His own inability to educate the child on other lines is another and not less potent reason. The examination *régime* to which he has been subjected himself, partly, perhaps, under compulsion, but also and in larger measure of his own choice, deprives him, as we have already seen, of much of his freedom, initiative, and responsibility; and that being so, it is inevitable that within the limited range of free action which is left to him, he in his turn should devote his energies to depriving his pupils of the same vital qualities, and to making them the helpless creatures of habit and routine which he himself is tending to become. To give free play to a child's natural faculties and so lead him into the path of self-development and self-education, demands a high degree of intelligence on the part of the teacher, combined with the constant exercise of thought and initiative within a wide range of free action. If you tell a teacher in precise detail,

whether directly or indirectly, that he is to do this thing, and that thing, and the next thing, he will not be able to carry out your instructions, except by telling his pupils, again in precise detail, that they are to do this thing, and that thing, and the next thing. He cannot help himself. He has no choice in the matter. He is the victim of a quasi-physical compulsion. The pressure which is put upon him will inevitably be transmitted by him and through him to his pupils, and will inevitably be multiplied (the relations between teacher and pupil being what they are) in the course of transmission.

There is nothing that a healthy child hates so much as to have the use of his natural faculties and the play of his natural energies unduly restricted by parental or pedagogic control. We may therefore take for granted that the child will find himself ill at ease in a school in which every vital activity is rigidly repressed, and in which he spends most of his time in sitting still and waiting for orders. Nor will it add to his happiness to live habitually in an atmosphere of constraint, of austerity, of suspicion, of gloom. But I need not take pains to prove that education, as it is conducted in Western countries, is profoundly repugnant to the natural instincts of the healthy child. For that is precisely what it is intended to be. The idea of a child enjoying his "lessons" is foreign to the genius of the West. Dominated as he is by the inherited conviction that Man's nature is corrupt and that his instincts are evil, the Western teacher has set himself the task of doing violence

to the child's instinctive tendencies, of thwarting his inborn desires, of working against the grain of his nature. He has expected the child to rebel against this *régime,* and he has welcomed his rebellion as a proof of the corruption of Man's nature, and therefore of the soundness of the traditional philosophy of education.

But if education is hateful to the child, how is he to be induced to submit to being educated? Some co-operation on his part will be necessary. How is it to be secured? By precisely the same methods as those by which Man, in the course of his education, has been induced to co-operate with God. The child, like Man, is to be "saved"—to be rescued from Nature and from himself—by being led into the path of mechanical obedience. The child, like Man, is to be kept in that path by a system of external rewards and punishments. If he will not do what he is told to do, he will be punished by his teacher. If he will do what he is told to do, he will escape punishment, and he may possibly, when his merits have accumulated sufficiently, receive a reward. In the education of Man by the God of Israel the balance between rewards and punishments has been kept fairly even. Hell has been balanced by Heaven, calamity by prosperity, death by life. It has been far otherwise with the child. His punishments have been many, and his rewards few. At the present day men are more humane than they used to be; and corporal punishment, though still resorted to, counts for less than it used to do in the training of the child. But punishments of various kinds are still regarded as indispensable

adjuncts to school discipline; and it is still taken for granted in far too many schools that the fear of punishment and the hope of reward are the only effective motives to educational effort.

It is difficult to say which of the two motives is the more likely to demoralise the child. A *régime* of punishment is not necessarily a *régime* of cruelty; but punishment can scarcely fail to savour of severity, and when the doctrine of original sin is in the ascendant, and the inborn wilfulness and stubbornness of the child are postulated by his teachers, the indefinable boundary line between severity and cruelty is easily crossed. Of the tendency of cruelty to demoralise its victims I have already spoken. But the effect of punishment on the child must be considered in its relation to his mental, as well as to his moral, development. Scholarships, prizes, high places in class, and other such rewards are for the few, not for the many. If the many are to be roused to exertion, the fear of punishment (in the hypothetical absence of any other motive) must be ever before them. What will happen to them when that motive is withdrawn, as it will be when the child becomes the adolescent? His education has been distasteful to the child, partly because his teachers have assumed from the outset that it would be and must be so, but chiefly because in their ignorance they have taken pains to make it so, his school life having been so ordered as to combine the maximum of strain with the maximum of *ennui*. His teachers have done everything for him, except those mechanical and monotonous exercises which they felt they might trust him to do by himself.

Some of his mental faculties have become stunted and atrophied through lack of exercise. Others have been allowed to wither in the bud. If he happens to belong to the "masses," he will have completed his school education at the age of thirteen or fourteen. What will he do with himself when there is no longer a teacher at his elbow to tell him what to do and how to do it, and to stand over him (should this be necessary) while he does it? Why should he go on with studies which he has neither the inclination nor the ability to pursue, and which, in point of fact, he has never really begun? And why should he continue to exert himself when, owing to his being at last beyond the reach of punishment, the need for him to do so—the only need which he has been accustomed to regard as imperative—has ceased to exist?

The objections to the hope of reward as a motive to educational effort are of another kind. Prizes, as I have said, are for the few; and it is the consciousness of being one of the elect which invests the winning of a prize with its chief attraction. The prize system makes a direct appeal to the vanity and egoism of the child. It encourages him to think himself better than others, to pride himself on having surpassed his class-mates and shone at their expense. The clever child is to work hard, not because knowledge is worth winning for its own sake and for his own sake, but because it will be pleasant for him to feel that he has succeeded where others have failed. It is a just reproach against the examination system that while, by its demand for outward results it does its best to destroy individuality, the essence of which is

sincerity of expression, it also does its best to foster individualism, by appealing, with its offer of prizes and other "distinctions," to those instincts which predispose each one of us to affirm and exalt that narrow, commonplace, superficial aspect of his being which he miscalls his *self*.

Thus the hope of reward tends to demoralise the clever child by making an appeal to basely selfish motives. At the same time it is probably deluding him with the belief that he has more capacity than he really has. If the examination system is, as I have suggested, the keystone of the arch of Western education, it is by means of the prize system that the keystone has been firmly cemented into its place. An examination which had no rewards or distinctions to offer to the competitors would not be an effective stimulus to exertion. That being so, our educationalists have taken care that to every examination some external reward or rewards shall be attached. Even if there are no material prizes to appeal to the child's cupidity, there is always the class-list, with its so-called "order of merit," to appeal to his vanity. Our educationalists have also taken care that during the periods of childhood, adolescence, and even early maturity, every prize that is offered for competition shall be awarded after a formal examination and on the consideration of its tabulated results. The appointments in the Home, Colonial, and Indian Civil Services, the promotions in the Army and Navy, the fellowships and scholarships at the Universities, the scholarships at the Public Schools, the medals, books, and other prizes that are offered to school-children, are all

awarded to those who have distinguished themselves in the corresponding examinations, no other qualification than that of ability to shine in an examination being looked for in the competitors. There are, no doubt, exceptions to these general statements, but they are so few that they scarcely count. We have seen that the ascendency of the examination system in our schools and colleges is largely due to the vulgar confusion between information and knowledge; and we have also seen that the examination system reacts upon that fatal confusion and tends to strengthen and perpetuate it. If, then, the effect of the prize system is to consolidate the authority of the formal examination and intensify its influence, we shall not go far wrong in assuming that in the various competitions for prizes the confusion between information and knowledge will play a vital part. And, in point of fact, the cleverness which enables the child—I ignore for the moment the adolescent and the adult student—to win prizes of various kinds is found, when carefully analysed, to resolve itself, in nine cases out of ten, into the ability to receive, retain, and retail information. As this particular ability is but a small part of that mental capacity which education is supposed to train, it is clear that the clever child who gets to the top of his class, and wins prizes in so doing, may easily be led to over-estimate his powers, and to take himself far more seriously than it is either right or wise of him to do. His over-confidence may for a time prove an effective stimulus to exertion; but the exertion will probably be misdirected; and later on, when he finds himself confronted by the complex realities

of life, and when problems have to be solved which demand the exercise of other faculties than that of memory, his belief in himself, which is the outcome of a false criterion of merit, may induce him to undertake what he cannot accomplish, and may lead at last—owing to his having lost touch with the actualities of things—to his complete undoing.

And as under the prize system the child who is high in his class is apt to over-estimate his ability, so the child who is low in his class is apt to accept the verdict of the class-list as final, and to regard himself as a failure because he lacks the superficial ability which enables a child to shine on the examination day. Again and again it happens that the dunce of his class goes to the front in the battle of life. But numerous and significant as these cases are, they are unfortunately exceptions to a general rule. For one dunce who emerges from the depths of "apparent failure," there are ten who go under after a more or less protracted struggle, and sink contentedly to the bottom. The explanation of this is that though every child has capacity (apart, of course, from the congenital idiot and the mentally "defective"), there are many kinds of capacity which a formal examination fails to discover, and which the education that is dominated by the prize system fails to develop. The child whose particular kind of capacity does not count, either in the ordinary school lesson or on the examination day, is not aware that he is capable; and as he is always low on the class-list, and is therefore regarded by his teachers as dull and stupid, he not unnaturally acquiesces in the current and apparently authoritative estimate of

his powers, and, losing heart about himself, ends by becoming the failure which he has been taught to believe himself to be. In brief, while the prize system breeds ungrounded and therefore dangerous self-esteem in the child whom it labels as bright, it breeds ungrounded but not the less fatal self-distrust in the child whom it labels as dull.

We have seen that there comes a time in the life of every man when the fear of punishment ceases to act as a stimulus to educational exertion. It is the same with the hope of reward. Examinations, and the prizes which reward success in examinations, are for the young. What will happen to the prize-winner when there are no more prizes for him to compete for? Will he continue to pursue knowledge for its own sake? Alas! he has never pursued it for its own sake. He has pursued it for the sake of the prizes and other honours which it brought him. When he has won his last prize the chances are that he will lose all interest in that branch of learning in which he achieved distinction, unless, indeed, he has to earn his livelihood by teaching it. Of the scores of young men who distinguish themselves in "Classics" at Oxford and Cambridge, how many will continue to study the classical writers when they have gained the "Firsts" for which they worked so diligently? Apart from those who are going to teach Classics in the Public Schools or Universities, a mere handful,—one in ten perhaps, though that is probably an extravagant estimate. And yet the poets, philosophers, and historians whom they have studied are amongst the greatest that the world has produced. What is

it, then, that kills, in nine cases out of ten, the classical student's interest in the masterpieces of antiquity? The obvious fact that he was never interested in them for their own sakes—that he studied them, not in order to enjoy them or profit by them, but in order to pass an examination in them, of which he might be able to say in after years:

> "I am named and known by that hour's feat,
> There took my station and degree."

How many Wranglers, other than those who have or will become schoolmasters or college tutors, continue to study mathematics? How many of the First Classmen in Science, History, Law, and other Honour "Schools" continue to study their respective subjects? In every case an utterly insignificant minority.

But if the prize system does this to the young man of twenty-two or twenty-three, if it kills his interest in learning, if it makes him register an inward vow never again to open the books which he has crammed so successfully for his examinations, what may it be expected to do to the child whose school education comes to an end when he is only thirteen or fourteen years old? When, with the fear of punishment, the complementary hope of reward is withdrawn from him, is it reasonable to expect him to continue his education, to continue to apply himself to subjects with which his acquaintance has been entirely formal and superficial, and which he has never been allowed to digest and assimilate? The utter indifference of the average ex-elementary scholar to literature,

to history, to geography, to science, to music, to art, is the world-wide answer to this question.

For what is, above all, hateful in any scheme of rewards and punishments, when applied to the school life of the young, is that it wholly externalises what is really an inward and spiritual process, the evolution of the youthful mind. Just as in the sphere of religion it is postulated as a self-evident truth that righteousness is not its own reward, nor iniquity its own punishment,—so in the sphere of education it is postulated as a self-evident truth, that knowledge is not its own reward, nor ignorance its own punishment. And just as in the sphere of religion the appeal to Man's selfish hopes and ignoble fears has generated a radical misconception of the meaning and purpose of righteousness, which has caused his moral and spiritual energies to be diverted into irreligious or anti-religious channels, to the detriment of his inward and spiritual growth,—so in the sphere of education the appeal to the child's selfish desires and ignoble fears has generated a radical misconception of the meaning and purpose of knowledge, which has caused his mental energies to be diverted into uneducational channels, to the detriment of his mental growth. In each case the scheme of rewards and punishments, acting like an immense blister, when applied to a healthy body, draws to the surface the life-blood which ought to nourish and purify the vital organs of the soul (or mind), thereby impoverishing the vital organs, and inflaming and disfiguring the surface. For if the surface life, with its outward and visible "results," is to be happy and productive, the health of the vital

organs must be carefully maintained. This is the fundamental truth which those who control education in the West have persistently ignored.

The system of education which I have tried to describe is a practical embodiment of the ideas that govern the popular philosophy of the West. One who had studied that philosophy, and who wished to ascertain what provision it made for the education of the young, would in the course of his inquiry construct *a priori* the precise system of education which is in vogue in all Western countries. The supposed relation between God and his fallen and rebellious offspring, Man, is obviously paralleled by the relation between the teacher and the child; and it is therefore clear that the supposed dealings of God with Man ought to be paralleled by the dealings of the teacher with the child. That they are so paralleled—that salvation by machinery has found its most exact counterpart in education by machinery—the history of education has made abundantly clear.

Whatever else the current system of education may do to the child, there is one thing which it cannot fail to do to him,—to blight his mental growth. What particular form or forms this blighting influence may take will depend in each particular case on a variety of circumstances. Experience tells us that what happens in most cases is that Western education strangles some faculties, arrests the growth of others, stunts the growth of a third group, and distorts the growth of a fourth.

Is it intended that education should do all this?

This question is not so paradoxical as it sounds. My primary assumption that the function of education is to foster growth may be a truism in the eyes of those who agree with it; but Western orthodoxy, just so far as it is self-conscious and sincere, must needs repudiate it as a pestilent heresy. For if what grows is intrinsically evil, what can growth do for it but carry it towards perdition?

What is it that grows? It is time that I should ask myself this question. My answer to it is, in brief, that it is the whole human being that grows, the whole nature of the child,—body, mind, heart and soul. When I use these familiar words, I am far from wishing to suggest that human nature is divisible into four provinces or compartments. In every stage of its development human nature is a living and indivisible whole. Each of the four words stands for a typical aspect of Man's being, but one of the four may also be said to stand for the totality of Man's being,—the word *soul*. For it is the soul which manifests as *body*, which thinks as *mind*, which feels and loves as *heart*, and which is what it is—though not perhaps what it really or finally is—as *soul*.

The function of education, then, is to foster the growth of the child's whole nature, or, in a word, of his soul. I ought, perhaps, to apologise for my temerity in using this now discredited word. In the West Man does not believe in the soul. How can he? He does not believe in God either as the eternal source or as the eternal end of his own nature. It follows that he does not and cannot believe in the unity of his own being. He has been taught that his nature is corrupt, evil, godless;

and that the "soul," which is somehow or other attached to his fallen nature during his "earthly pilgrimage," was supernaturally created at the moment of his birth. He is now beginning to reject this conception of the soul; but he cannot yet rise to the higher conception of it as the vital essence of his being, as the divine germ in virtue of which his nature is no mere aggregate of parts or faculties, but a living whole. So deeply rooted in the Western mind is disbelief in the reality of the soul that it is difficult to use the word, when speaking to a Western audience, without exposing oneself to the charge of insincerity,—not to speak of the graver charge of "bad form." A savour either of *cant* or *gush* hangs about the word, and is not easily detached from it. That being so, it must be clearly understood that I mean by the soul the nature of Man considered in its unity and totality,—no more than this, and no less.

In the opening paragraph of this book I said that some of my readers would regard my fundamental assumption as a truism, others as a challenge, and others again as a wicked heresy. Whether it shall be regarded as a truism, a challenge, or a heresy, will depend on the way in which it is worded. To say that the function of education is to foster the growth of human nature, is to invite condemnation from those who regard human nature as ruined and corrupt. To say that the function of education is to foster the growth of the soul, is to issue a challenge to Western civilisation, which is based on the belief that the end of Man's being is not the growth of his soul, but the growth of his balance at the bank of material prosperity. To

say that the function of education is to foster the growth of certain faculties, is to insist on what no one who had given his mind to the matter would care to deny. For even the orthodox, who regard Man's nature in its totality as intrinsically evil, admit without hesitation that there are faculties in Man which can be and ought to be trained; while the "man of the world," whom we may regard as the most typical product of Western civilisation, is clamorous in his demand that education shall foster the growth of certain mental faculties which will enable the child to become an efficient clerk or workman, and so contribute to the enrichment of his employer and the community to which he belongs.

The Western educationalist will admit, then, that the function of education is to foster growth; and if you ask him what it is that grows or ought to grow under education's fostering care, he will give you a long list of faculties—mental, for the most part, but also moral and physical—and then break off under the impression that he has set education an adequate and a practicable task. But he has set it an inadequate and an impracticable task. For behind all the faculties that he enumerates dwells the living reality which he cannot bring himself to believe in,—the soul. And because he cannot bring himself to believe in the soul, he deprives the faculties which he proposes to cultivate of the very qualities which make them most worthy of cultivation,—of their interrelation, their interdependence, their organic unity. In other words he devitalises each of them by cutting it off from the life which is common to all of them, and

so paralyses its capacity for growing in the very act of taking thought for its growth. He forgets that every faculty which is worth cultivating both draws life from, and contributes life to, the general life of the growing child. He forgets that the child himself—"the living soul"—is growing in and through the growth of each of his opening faculties; and that unless, when a faculty seems to be growing, the life of the child is at once expressing itself in and renewing itself through the process of its growth, its semblance of growth is a pure illusion, the results that are produced being in reality as fraudulent as artificial flowers on a living rose-bush.

But the whole question may be looked at from another point of view. Let us assume, for argument's sake, that the function of education is to train, or foster the growth of, certain faculties, which are mainly though not exclusively mental, and that when those faculties have been duly trained the teacher has done his work. What, then, are the faculties which education is supposed to train? In my attempt to answer this question I will confine myself to the elementary school,—the only school which I can pretend to know well. A glance at the time-table of an ordinary elementary school might suggest to us that there were two chief groups of faculties to be trained—those which perceive and those which express, those which take in and those which give out. When such subjects as History, Geography, or Science are being taught, the child's perceptive faculties are being trained. When such subjects as Composition, Drawing or Singing are being taught, the child's expressive faculties are being

trained. So at least one might be disposed to assume.

In what relation do the perceptive faculties stand to the expressive? Is it possible to cultivate either group without regard to the other? It must be admitted that the methods employed in the ordinary elementary school seem to be governed by the assumption that the perceptive and the expressive faculties are two distinct groups which admit of being separately trained. In the ordinary Drawing lesson, for example, the child is trying to express what he does not even pretend to have perceived; whereas in the ordinary History or Science lesson the process is reversed, and the child pretends to perceive what he makes no attempt to express.

But is the assumption correct? Do the two groups of faculties admit of being separately trained? Is it possible to devote this hour or half-hour to the training of perception, and that to the training of expression? Surely not. Perception and expression are not two faculties, but one. Each is the very counterpart and correlate, each is the very life and soul, of the other. Each, when divorced from the other, ceases to be its own true self. When perception is real, living, informed with personal feeling, it must needs find for itself the outlet of expression. When expression is real, living, informed with personal feeling, perception—the child's own perception of things—must needs be behind it. More than that. *The perceptive faculties* (at any rate in childhood) *grow through the interpretation which expression gives them, and in no other way. And the expressive faculties grow by interpreting perception, and in no other way.* The child who tries to draw what he sees is training his power of

observation, not less than his power of expression. As he passes and repasses between the object of his perception and his representation of it, there is a continuous gain both to his vision and to his technique. The more faithfully he tries to render his impression of the object, the more does that impression gain in truth and strength; and in proportion as the impression becomes truer and stronger, so does the rendering of it become more masterly and more correct. So, again, if a man tries to set forth in writing his views about some difficult problem—social, political, metaphysical, or whatever it may be—the very effort that he makes to express himself clearly and coherently will tend to bring order into the chaos and light into the darkness of his mind, to widen his outlook on his subject, to deepen his insight into it, to bring new aspects of it within the reach of his conscious thought. And here, as in the case of the child who tries to draw what he sees, there is a continuous reciprocal action between perception and expression, in virtue of which each in turn helps forward the evolution of the other. Even in so abstract and impersonal a subject as mathematics, the reaction of expression on perception is strong and salutary. The student who wishes to master a difficult piece of bookwork should try to write it out in his own words; in the effort to set it out concisely and lucidly he will gradually perfect his apprehension of it. Were he to solve a difficult problem, he would probably regard his grasp of the solution as insecure and incomplete until he had succeeded in making it intelligible to the mind of another. When perception is deeply tinged with emotion, as when one sees what is

beautiful, or admires what is noble, the attempt to express it in language, action, or art, seems to be dictated by some inner necessity of one's nature. The meaning of this is that the perception itself imperatively demands expression in order that, in and through the struggle of the artistic consciousness to do full justice to it, it may gradually realise its hidden potentialities, discover its inner meaning, and find its true self.

Once we realise that expression is the other self of perception, it becomes permissible for us to say that to train the perceptive faculties—the faculties by means of which Man lays hold upon the world that surrounds him, and draws it into himself and makes it his own—is the highest achievement of the teacher's art. Even from the point of view of my primary truism, this conception of the meaning and purpose of education holds good. For according to that truism the business of the teacher is to foster the growth of the child's soul; and the soul grows by the use of its perceptive faculties, which, by enabling it to take in and assimilate an ever-widening environment, cause a gradual enlargement of its consciousness and a proportionate expansion of its life. But the perceptive faculties in their turn grow by expressing themselves; and unless they are allowed to express themselves—unless the child is allowed to express himself (for expression, if it is genuine, is always self-expression)—their growth will be arrested, and the mission which *all* educationalists assign to education will not have been fulfilled.

The question is, then, Does the system of education which prevails in all Western countries provide for self-expression on the part of the child?

CHAPTER III

A FAMILIAR TYPE OF SCHOOL [1]

IN this chapter I shall have in my mind a type of school which is familiar to all who are interested in elementary education. What percentage of the schools of England are of that particular type I cannot pretend to say. In the days of payment by results the percentage was unquestionably very high. The system under which we all worked made that inevitable. The days of payment by results are over, but their consequences are with us still. The pioneer is abroad in the land, but he has had, and still has, formidable difficulties to overcome. The percentage of routine-ridden schools is considerably lower than it used to be, and it is falling from year to year. Of this there can

[1] It must be clearly understood that throughout this chapter the school that I have in mind is one for "older children" only. Whatever may be the defects of the elementary infant schools, an excessive regard for outward and visible results is not one of them. Exemption from the pressure of a formal external examination has meant much more to them than to the schools for older children; and the atmosphere of the good infant schools is, in consequence, freer, happier, more recreative, and more truly educative than that of the upper schools of equivalent merit. And when we compare grade with grade, we find that the superiority of the elementary infant schools is still more pronounced. The "Great Public Schools," and the costly preparatory schools that lead up to them, may or may not be worthy of their high reputation; but as regards facilities for the education (in school) of their "infants," the "classes" are unquestionably much less fortunate than the "masses."

be no doubt. Each teacher in turn who reads this chapter will, I hope, be able to say that the school which is in my mind is not his. But I can assure him that there are thousands of schools in which all or most of the evils on which I am about to comment are still rampant; and I will add, for his consolation, that it would be a miracle if this were not so.

The first forty minutes of the morning session are given, in almost every elementary school, to what is called *Religious Instruction*. This goes on, morning after morning, and week after week. The child who attends school regularly and punctually, as many children do, will have been the victim of upwards of two thousand "Scripture lessons" by the time he leaves school.

The question of religious education in elementary schools has long been the centre of a perfect whirlpool of controversial talk. The greater part of this talk is, to speak plainly, blatant cant. Every candidate for a seat in the House of Commons thinks it incumbent upon him to say something about religious education, but not one in a hundred of them has ever been present in an elementary school while religious instruction was being given. The Bishops of the Established Church wax eloquent in the House of Lords over the wickedness of a "godless education" and the virtue of "definite dogmatic teaching," but it may be doubted if there is a Bishop in the House who has in recent years sat out a Scripture lesson in a Church of England school. It would be well if all who talked publicly about religious education could be sen-

tenced to devote a month to the personal study of religious instruction as it is ordinarily given in elementary schools. At the end of the month they would be wiser and sadder men, and in future they would probably talk less about religious education and think more.

The Scripture lesson, as it is familiarly called, is supposed to make the children of England religious, in the special sense which each church or sect attaches to that word,—to make them good Catholics, good Churchmen, good Wesleyans, good Bible Christians, good Jews. But as those who are most in earnest about religion, and most sincere in their religious convictions, unite in assuring us that England is relapsing into paganism, it may be doubted if the religious education of the elementary school child—a process which has been going on for half a century or more—has been entirely successful. While the fact that the English parent, who must himself have attended from 1,500 to 2,000 Scripture lessons in his schooldays, is not under any circumstances to be trusted to give religious instruction to his own children, shows that those who control the religious education of the youthful "masses" have but little confidence in the effect of their system on the religious life and faith of the English people.

They have good ground for their subconscious distrust of it. We have seen that the vulgar confusion between information and knowledge is at the root of much that is unsound in education. There is no branch of education in which this confusion is so fallacious or so fatal as in that which is called religious. The process of converting information

into knowledge is a comparatively easy one when we are dealing with matters of detailed fact. Information as to the dates of the kings of England, as to the bays and capes of the British Isles, as to the exports and imports of Liverpool, as to the weights and measures of this or that country, is in each case readily convertible into knowledge of the given facts. But directly we get away from mere facts, and begin to concern ourselves with what is large, vague, subtle, and obscure,—with forces, for example, with causes, with laws, with principles,—the difficulty of collecting adequate and appropriate information about our subject becomes great, and the difficulty of converting such information into knowledge becomes greater still. Information as to the dates and names of the English kings, and other historical facts, is easily converted into knowledge of those facts, but it is not easily converted into knowledge of English history. Information as to the names and positions of capes and bays, as to areas and populations, and other geographical facts, is easily converted into knowledge of those facts, but it is not easily converted into knowledge of geography. Information as to arithmetical rules and tables, as to weights and measures, and other arithmetical facts, is easily converted into knowledge of those facts, but it is not easily converted into knowledge of arithmetic. In each case a *sense* must be evolved if the information is to be assimilated, and so converted into real knowledge; and though it is true that the sense in question grows, in part at least, by feeding on appropriate information, it is equally true that if, owing to defective training, the sense remains undeveloped, the in-

formation supplied will remain unassimilated, and the tacit assumption that the possession of information is equivalent to the possession of real knowledge will delude both the teacher and the taught. It is possible, as one knows from experience, for a boy to have mastered all the arithmetical rules and tables with which his master has supplied him, and to have all his measures and weights at his fingers' ends, and yet to be so destitute of the arithmetical sense as to give without a moment's misgiving an entirely nonsensical answer to a simple arithmetical problem,—to say, for example, as I have known half a class of boys say, that a *room* is *five shillings and sixpence wide*. Such a boy, though his head may be stuffed with arithmetical information, has no knowledge of arithmetic.

The gulf between memorised information and real knowledge becomes deep and wide in proportion as the subject matter is one which demands for its effective apprehension either intellectual effort or emotional insight. When both these variables are demanded, the gulf widens and deepens at a ratio which is "geometrical" rather than "arithmetical"; and when a high degree of each is demanded, the separation between knowledge and information is complete.

The Art Master who should try to train the æsthetic sense of his pupils by making them learn by heart a string of propositions in which he had set out the artistic merits of sundry masterpieces of painting and sculpture, would expose himself to well-merited ridicule. So would the teacher who should try to train the scientific sense of his pupils by no other method than that of making them learn

scientific formulæ by heart. What shall we say, then, of the teacher who tries to train the religious sense of his pupils by supplying them with rations of theological and theologico-historical information? Whatever else we may mean by the word God, we mean what is infinitely great, and therefore beyond the reach of human thought, and we mean what is "most high," and therefore beyond the reach of the heart's desire. It follows that for knowledge of God the maximum of intellectual effort is needed, in conjunction with the maximum of emotional insight; and it follows further that the gulf between knowledge of God and information about God is unimaginably wide and deep,—so wide and so deep that out of our very attempts to span or fathom it the doubt at last arises whether the idea of acquiring information about God may not, after all, be the idlest of dreams.

Nevertheless the pastors and masters of our elementary schools are, with few exceptions, engaged, *sanctâ simplicitate*, in trying to make the children of England religious by cramming them with theological and theologico-historical information,—information as to the nature and attributes of God, as to the inner constitution of his being, as to his relations to Man and the Universe, as to his reported doings in the past. And in order that the giving, receiving, and retaining of this unverifiable information may be regarded by all concerned as the central feature of the Scripture lesson, to the neglect of all the other aspects of religious education, the spiritual "powers that be" (and also, I am told, some of the Local Education Authorities) have decreed that the schools under their jurisdic-

tion shall be subjected to a yearly examination in "religious knowledge" at the hands of a "Diocesan Inspector," or some other official.

To one who has convinced himself, as I have, that a right attitude towards the thing known is of the essence of knowledge, and that reverence and devotion—to go no further—are of the essence of a right attitude towards God, the idea of holding a formal examination in religious knowledge seems scarcely less ridiculous than the idea of holding a formal examination in unselfishness or brotherly love. The phrase "to examine in religious knowledge" has no meaning for me. The verb is out of all relation to its indirect object. What the Diocesan Inspector attempts to do cannot possibly be done. The test of religious knowledge is necessarily practical and vital, not formal and mechanical. Even if I were to admit, for argument's sake, that the information with which we cram the elementary school child between 9.5 and 9.45 a.m. had been supernaturally communicated by God to Man, my general position would remain unaffected. For experience has amply proved that a child—or, for the matter of that, a man—may know much theology and even be "mighty in the Scriptures," and yet show by his conduct that his religious sense has not been awakened, and that therefore he has no knowledge of God; just as we have seen that a child may know by heart all arithmetical rules and tables, and yet show, by his helplessness in the face of a simple problem, that his arithmetical sense has not been awakened, and that therefore he has no knowledge of arithmetic.

The time given to religious instruction is, to

make a general statement, the only part of the session in which the children are being prepared for a formal *external* examination. That being so, it is no matter for wonder that many of the glaring faults of method and organisation which the examination system fostered in our elementary schools between the years 1862 and 1895, and which are now being abandoned, however slowly, reluctantly, and sporadically, during the hours of "secular" instruction, still find a refuge in the Scripture lesson. Overgrouping of classes, overcrowding of school-rooms, collective answering, collective repetition, scribbling on slates, and other faults with which inspectors were only too familiar in bygone days, are still rampant while religious instruction is being given.[1] The Diocesan Inspector is an examiner, pure and simple, and is never present when the Scripture lesson is in progress. Whether he would find anything to criticise if he were present, may be doubted. I have fre-

[1] Not long ago I happened to enter the Boys' Department of an urban Church School at about 9.15 a.m. The Headmaster was sitting at his desk, drawing up schemes of "secular" work. All the boys above "Standard III"—94 in number—were grouped together, listening, or pretending to listen, to a "chalk-and-talk" lecture on "Prayer" [of which there are apparently five varieties, viz.: (1) Invocation, (2) Deprecation, (3) Obsecration, (4) Intercession, (5) Supplication]. The Headmaster explained to me that "of course it was only during the Scripture lesson" that this overgrouping went on. The lecture on Prayer was given by a young Assistant-master, whose naïve delight in the long words that he rolled out *ore rotundo* and then chalked up on the blackboard, had blinded him to the obvious fact that he was making no impression whatever on his audience. The boys, one and all, reminded me forcibly of the "white-headed boy" in Dickens' village school, who displayed "in the expression of his face a remarkable capacity of totally abstracting his mind from the spelling on which his eyes were fixed."

quently been told by teachers that it is his demand for a good volume of sound, when he is catechising the children, which keeps alive during the Scripture lesson the pestilent habit of collective answering, in defiance of the obvious fact that what is everybody's business is nobody's business, and that an experienced bell-wether can easily give a lead to a whole class. An inconvenient train service may compel H.M. Inspector to be present when religious instruction is being given; but though he may find much to deplore in what he sees and hears, he must abstain from criticism, and be content to play the *rôle* of the man who looks over a hedge while a horse is being stolen.

In most elementary schools religion is taught on an elaborate syllabus which is imposed on the teacher by an external authority, and which therefore tends to destroy his freedom and his interest in the work. It is not his business to take thought for the religious training of his pupils, to consider how the religious instinct may best be awakened in them, how their latent knowledge of God may best be evolved. His business is to prepare them for their yearly examination, to cram them with catechisms, hymns, texts, and collects, and with stories of various kinds,—stories from the folk-lore of Israel, from the history of the Jews, from the Gospel narratives. To appeal to the reasoning powers of his pupils would be foreign to his aim, and foreign, let me say in passing, to the whole tradition of religious teaching in the West. The burden of preparing for an examination, whatever the examination may be, falls mainly on the faculty of memory. This is a rule to which there are very

few exceptions. When the examination is one in "religious knowledge," the burden of preparing for it falls wholly on the faculty of memory. To appeal to the reasoning powers of the scholars might conceivably provoke them to ask inconvenient questions, and might even give rise to a spirit of rationalism in the school,—the spirit which "orthodoxy" has always regarded as the very antipole to religious faith.

But what of the child's emotional faculties? Will not the beauty of the Gospel stories, will not the sublimity of the Old Testament poetry, make their own appeal to these? They might do so if they were allowed to exert their spiritual magnetism. But what chance have they? The chilling shadow of the impending examination falls upon them and cancels their educative influence. It is not because the Gospel stories are full of beauty and spiritual meaning that the child has to learn them, but because he will be questioned on them by the Diocesan Inspector. It is not because certain passages from the Old Testament are poetry of a high order that the child commits them to memory, but because he may have to repeat them to the Diocesan Inspector. We cannot serve God and Mammon,—the God of poetry and the inward life, the Mammon of outward results. The thing is not to be done, and the pretence of doing it is a mockery and a fraud. The compulsory preparation of the plays of Shakespeare and other literary masterpieces for a formal examination, too often gives the schoolboy, or the college student, a permanent distaste for English literature. The study of the Ancient Classics for the Oxford "Schools"

or the Cambridge "Tripos" too often gives the studious undergraduate a permanent distaste for the literatures of Greece and Rome. Does it not follow *a fortiori* that to cram a young child, for the purposes of a formal examination, to cram him, year after year, with the idyllic stories of the New Testament and the poetic beauties of the Old, will in all probability go a long way towards blighting in the bud the child's latent capacity for responding to the appeal, not of the Bible alone, but of spiritual poetry as such?

I do not wish to suggest that the religious instruction given in our elementary schools is always formal and mechanical. There are teachers who can break through the toils of any system, however deadly, and give life to their teaching in defiance of conditions which would paralyse the energies of lesser men. As I write, I recall two teachers of elementary schools, who, in spite of having to prepare their pupils for diocesan inspection, succeeded in quickening their religious instincts into vital activity. The first was a schoolmaster,—a "strong Churchman," and a sincerely religious man. The second was a woman of genius, whose extraordinary sympathy with and insight into the soul of the child, enabled her to give free play to all his expansive instincts, and in and through the evolution of these to foster the growth of his religious sense. I can never feel quite sure that this teacher fully realised how deeply, and yet healthily, religious her children were. If she did not, I can but apply to her what Diderot said to David the painter, when the latter confessed that he had not intended to produce some artistic effect

which the former had discovered in one of his pictures: "Quoi! c'est à votre insu? C'est encore mieux." To make children religious without intending to do so is a profoundly significant achievement, for it means that the fatal distinction between religious and secular education has been "utterly abolished and destroyed."

Both these teachers fell, as it happened, under the ban of the Diocesan Inspector's displeasure. The schoolmaster took over a school which was not only inefficient in the eyes of the Education Department, in respect of instruction and discipline, but was also tainted in its upper classes with moral depravity. He speedily restored it to efficiency, and reformed its moral tone. In accomplishing these salutary changes, he relied mainly on an appeal which he made, in all manly sincerity, to the religious sense of the older boys. The faith in human nature which prompted him to make this appeal was justified by the response which it evoked. In less than a year the school was transformed beyond recognition. In less than two years it was one of the best in its county; indeed in respect of moral tone and religious atmosphere it was perhaps *the* best. Meanwhile the work of cramming the children for the yearly diocesan examination must have fallen into arrears; for the school, which under my friend's incompetent predecessor had always been classed as "Excellent," sank to the level of "Good" in the year after he left, and in the following year to the level of "Fair." Any one who has any acquaintance with the reports of the Diocesan Inspector knows that the summary mark "Fair," when em-

ployed by him, is equivalent to utter damnation.

The schoolmistress always had a horror of formal teaching, and a special horror of cramming young children for formal examinations; and I can only wonder that her downfall was so long delayed. Sooner or later, if she was to remain true to her own first principles, her work was bound to incur the condemnation of the Diocesan Inspector.

Nevertheless, having read hundreds of diocesan reports, and realised how lavish of praise and chary of blame the Diocesan Inspector usually is, I am inclined to suspect that the comparative failure of the children on the examination day was not the sole nor even the chief cause of the severe censure which these two schools received. I am inclined to think that in each case the inspector recognised in the exceptional religious vitality of a school which was deficient, from his point of view, in religious knowledge, an implicit challenge to his own preconceived notions, and that, without for a moment intending to be unfair, he responded to this challenge by giving the school a strongly adverse report. Immorality and irreligiousness as such are comparatively venial offences in the eyes of religious orthodoxy. What it cannot tolerate is that men should be moral and religious in any but the "orthodox" ways.

Apart from these two exceptional cases, there are of course hundreds and even thousands of teachers whose personal influence is a partial antidote to the numbing poison which is being distilled, slowly but surely, from the daily Scripture lesson. But the net result of giving formal and

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mechanical instruction on the greatest of all "great matters" is to depress the spiritual vitality of the children of England to a point which threatens the extinction of the spiritual life of the nation. My schoolmaster friend, who, besides being deeply religious (in the best sense of the word), is a man of sound judgment and wide and varied experience, has more than once assured me that religious instruction, as given in the normal Church of England school (his experience has been limited to schools of that type), is paganising the people of England,—paganising them because it presents religion to them in a form which they instinctively reject, accepting it at first under compulsion, but turning away from it at last with deep-seated weariness and permanent distaste.

The boy who, having attended two thousand Scripture lessons, says to himself when he leaves school: "If this is religion, I will have no more of it," is acting in obedience to a healthy instinct. He is to be honoured rather than blamed for having realised at last that the chaff on which he has so long been fed is not the life-giving grain which, unknown to himself, his inmost soul demands.

That England is relapsing into paganism is, as we have seen, the sincere conviction of many earnest Christians. Why this should be so, they cannot understand. In their desire to account for so distressing a phenomenon, they will have recourse to any explanation, however far-fetched and fantastic, rather than acknowledge that it is the Scripture lesson in the elementary school which is paganising the masses. If the Churches could have their way, they would doubtless try to mend

matters by doubling the hours that are given to religious instruction, by making the Diocesan Inspector's visit a half-yearly instead of a yearly function, and by cramming the children for it with redoubled energy. In their refusal to reckon with human nature, they are true to the first principles of their religion and their philosophy. But it is possible to buy consistency at too high a price. The laws and tendencies of Nature are what they are; and it is madness, not heroism, to ignore them. To those who refuse to reckon with human nature, the day will surely come when human nature, evolving itself under the stress of its own forces and in obedience to its own laws, will cease to take account of them.[1]

When the hands of the clock point to a quarter to ten, the religious education of the child is over for the day, and his secular instruction has begun. That the religious education of the child should be supposed to end when the Scripture lesson is over, is the last and strongest proof of the fundamental falsity of that conception of religion on which, as on a quicksand, his education, religious and secular, has been based.

[1] There are many elementary schools which the Diocesan Inspector does not enter. In the "Provided" or "Council" Schools "undenominational Bible teaching" takes the place of the "definite dogmatic instruction in religious knowledge" which is tested by Diocesan Inspection. But even when undogmatic Bible teaching is given, the shadow of an impending examination, external or internal as the case may be, too often sterilises the efforts of the teacher. Not that the efforts of the teacher would in any case be productive so long as the attitude of popular thought towards the Bible remained unchanged. To go into this burning question would involve me in an unjustifiable digression; but I must be allowed to express my conviction

After Scripture comes as a rule Arithmetic. During the former lesson the teacher, acting under compulsion, does his best, as we have seen, to deaden the child's spiritual faculties. During the latter, he not infrequently does his best to deaden the child's mental faculties. In each case he is to be pitied rather than blamed. The conditions under which he works, and has long worked, are too strong for him. If we are to understand why secular instruction, as given in our elementary schools, is what it is, we must go back for half a century or so and trace the steps by which the "Education Department" forced elementary education in England into the grooves in which, in many schools, it is still moving, and from which even the most enlightened and enterprising teachers find it difficult to escape.

In 1861 the Royal Commission (under the Duke of Newcastle as Chairman), which had been appointed in 1858 in order to inquire into "the state of popular education in England, and as to the measures required for the extension of sound and cheap elementary instruction to all classes of the people," issued its report, in which it recommended *inter alia* that the Grants paid to elementary schools

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that the teaching of the Bible in our elementary schools will never be anything but misguided and mischievous until those who are responsible for it have realised that the Old Testament is the inspired literature of a particular people, and have ceased to regard it as the authentic biography of the Eternal God. It is to the current misconception of the meaning and value of the Bible, and the consequent misconception of the relation of God to Nature and to Man, that the externalism of the West, which is the source of all the graver defects of modern education, is (as I contend) largely due; and it is useless to try to remedy those defects so long as we allow our philosophy of life to be perennially poisoned at its highest springs.

should be expressly apportioned on the examination of individual children. This recommendation was carried into effect in the Lowe Revised Code of 1862; and from that date till 1895 a considerable part of the Grant received by each school was paid on the results of a yearly examination held by H.M. Inspector on an elaborate syllabus, formulated by the Department and binding on all schools alike. On the official report which followed this examination depended the reputation and financial prosperity of the school, and the reputation and financial prosperity of the teacher.[1] The consequent pressure on the teacher to exert himself was well-nigh irresistible; and he had no choice but to transmit that pressure to his subordinates and his pupils. The result was that in those days the average school was a hive of industry.

But it was also a hive of misdirected energy. The State, in prescribing a syllabus which was to be followed, in all the subjects of instruction, by all the schools in the country, without regard to local or personal considerations, was guilty of one capital offence. It did all his thinking for the teacher. It told him in precise detail what he was to do each year in each "Standard," how he was to handle each subject, and how far he was to go in it; what width of ground he was to cover; what amount of knowledge, what degree of accuracy was required for a "pass." In other words it provided him with his ideals, his general conceptions, his

[1] In far too many cases the teacher received a certain proportion of the Grant; and in any case his value in the market tended to vary directly with his ability to secure a large Grant for his school by his success in the yearly examination.

more immediate aims, his schemes of work; and if it did not control his methods in all their details, it gave him (by implication) hints and suggestions with regard to these on which he was not slow to act; for it told him that the work done in each class and each subject would be tested at the end of each year by a careful examination of each individual child; and it was inevitable that in his endeavour to adapt his teaching to the type of question which his experience of the yearly examination led him to expect, he should gradually deliver himself, mind and soul, into the hands of the officials of the Department,—the officials at Whitehall who framed the yearly syllabus, and the officials in the various districts who examined on it.

What the Department did to the teacher, it compelled him to do to the child. The teacher who is the slave of another's will cannot carry out his instructions except by making his pupils the slaves of his own will. The teacher who has been deprived by his superiors of freedom, initiative, and responsibility, cannot carry out his instructions except by depriving his pupils of the same vital qualities. The teacher who, in response to the deadly pressure of a cast-iron system, has become a creature of habit and routine, cannot carry out his instructions except by making his pupils as helpless and as puppet-like as himself.

But it is not only because mechanical obedience is fatal, in the long run, to mental and spiritual growth, that the regulation of elementary or any other grade of education by a uniform syllabus is to be deprecated. It is also because a uniform syllabus is, in the nature of things, a bad syllabus,

and because the degree of its badness varies directly with the area of the sphere of educational activity that comes under its control. It is easy for us of the Twentieth Century to laugh at the syllabuses which the Department issued, without misgiving, year after year, in the latter half of the Nineteenth. We were all groping in the dark in those days; and our whole attitude towards education was so fundamentally wrong that the absurdities of the yearly syllabus were merely so much by-play in the evolution of a drama which was a grotesque blend of tragedy and farce. But let us of the enlightened Twentieth Century try our hands at constructing a syllabus on which all the elementary schools of England are to be prepared for a yearly examination, and see if we can improve appreciably on the work of our predecessors. Some improvement there would certainly be, but it would not amount to very much. Were the "Board" to re-institute payment by results, and were they, with this end in view, to entrust the drafting of schemes of work in the various subjects to a committee of the wisest and most experienced educationalists in England, the resultant syllabus would be a dismal failure. For in framing their schemes these wise and experienced educationalists would find themselves compelled to take account of the lowest rather than of the highest level of actual educational achievement. What is exceptional and experimental cannot possibly find a place in a syllabus which is to bind all schools and all teachers alike, and which must therefore be so framed that the least capable teacher, working under the least favourable conditions, may hope, when his pupils are examined

on it, to achieve with decent industry a decent modicum of success. Under the control of a uniform syllabus, the schools which are now specialising and experimenting, and so giving a lead to the rest, would have to abandon whatever was interesting in their respective curricula, and fall into line with the average school; while, with the consequent lowering of the current *ideal* of efficiency, the level of the average school would steadily fall. A uniform syllabus is a bad syllabus, for this if for no other reason, that it is compelled to idealise the average; and that, inasmuch as education, so far as it is a living system, grows by means of its "leaders," the idealisation of the average is necessarily fatal to educational growth and therefore to educational life.

It was preordained, then, that the syllabuses which the Department issued, year by year, in the days of payment by results should have few merits and many defects. Yet even if, by an unimaginable miracle, they had all been educationally sound, the mere fact that all the teachers in England had to work by them would have made them potent agencies for evil. To be in bondage to a syllabus is a misfortune for a teacher, and a misfortune for the school that he teaches. To be in bondage to a syllabus which is binding on all schools alike, is a graver misfortune. To be in bondage to a bad syllabus which is binding on all schools alike, is of all misfortunes the gravest. Or if there is a graver, it is the fate that befell the teachers of England under the old *régime*,—the fate of being in bondage to a syllabus which was bad both because it had to come down to the level

of the least fortunate school and the least capable teacher, and also because it was the outcome of ignorance, inexperience, and bureaucratic self-satisfaction.

Of the evils that are inherent in the examination system as such—of its tendency to arrest growth, to deaden life, to paralyse the higher faculties, to externalise what is inward, to materialise what is spiritual, to involve education in an atmosphere of unreality and self-deception—I have already spoken at some length. In the days of payment by results various circumstances conspired to raise those evil tendencies to the highest imaginable "power." When inspectors ceased to examine (in the stricter sense of the word) they realised what infinite mischief the yearly examination had done. The children, the majority of whom were examined in reading and dictation out of their own reading-books (two or three in number, as the case might be), were drilled in the contents of those books until they knew them almost by heart. In arithmetic they worked abstract sums, in obedience to formal rules, day after day, and month after month; and they were put up to various tricks and dodges which would, it was hoped, enable them to know by what precise rules the various questions on the arithmetic cards were to be answered. They learned a few lines of poetry by heart, and committed all the "meanings and allusions" to memory, with the probable result—so sickening must the process have been—that they hated poetry for the rest of their lives. In geography, history, and grammar they were the victims of unintelligent oral cram, which they were compelled, under pains and

penalties, to take in and retain till the examination day was over, their ability to disgorge it on occasion being periodically tested by the teacher. And so with the other subjects. Not a thought was given, except in a small minority of the schools, to the real training of the child, to the fostering of his mental (and other) growth. To get him through the yearly examination by hook or by crook was the one concern of the teacher. As profound distrust of the teacher was the basis of the policy of the Department, so profound distrust of the child was the basis of the policy of the teacher. To leave the child to find out anything for himself, to work out anything for himself, to think out anything for himself, would have been regarded as a proof of incapacity, not to say insanity, on the part of the teacher, and would have led to results which, from the "percentage" point of view, would probably have been disastrous.

There were few inspectors who were not duly impressed from 1895 onwards by the gravity of the evils that inspection, as distinguished from mere examination, revealed to them; but it may be doubted if there were many inspectors who realised then, what some among them see clearly now, that the evils which distressed them were significant as symptoms even more than as sources of mischief,—as symptoms of a deep-seated and insidious malady, of the gradual ossification of the spiritual and mental muscles of both the teacher and the child, of the gradual substitution in the elementary school of machinery for life.

For us of the Twentieth Century who know enough about education to be aware of the shallow-

ness of our knowledge of it, and of the imperfection of the existing educational systems of our country, it may be difficult to realise that in the years when things were at their worst, at any rate in the field of elementary education, the Nation in general and the "Department" in particular were well content that things should remain as they were,—well content that the elementary school should be, not a nursery of growing seedlings and saplings, but a decently efficient mill, and that year after year this mill should keep on grinding out its dreary and meaningless "results." But in truth that ignorant optimism, that cheap content with the actual, was a sure proof that things *were* at their worst;—for

> "When we in our viciousness grow hard,
> (O misery on't) the wise gods seal our eyes
> In our own filth; drop our clear judgments; make us
> Adore our errors";

and the multiform discontent with education in its present stage of development, which is characteristic of our own generation, and which is in some ways so confusing and disconcerting, and so unfavourable to the smooth working of our educational machinery, has the merit of being a healthy and hopeful symptom.

But bad as things were in those days, there was at least one redeeming feature. The children were compelled to *work*, to exert themselves, to "put their backs into it." The need for this was obvious. The industry of the child meant so much professional reputation and, in the last resort, so much bread and butter to his teacher. It is true that the child was not allowed to do anything by or for himself; but it is equally true that he had to do

pretty strenuously whatever task was set him. He had to get up his two (or three) "Readers" so thoroughly that he could be depended upon to pass both the reading and the dictation test with success. He had to work his abstract sums in arithmetic correctly. He had to take in and remember the historical and geographical information with which he had been crammed. And so forth. There must be no shirking, no slacking on his part. His teachers worked hard, though "not according to knowledge"; and he must do the same. Active, in the higher sense of the word, he was never allowed to be; but he had to be actively receptive, strenuously automatic, or his teacher would know the reason why.

Such was the old *régime*. Its defects were so grave and so vital that, now that it has become discredited (in theory, if not in practice), we can but wonder how it endured for so long. As an ingenious instrument for arresting the mental growth of the child, and deadening all his higher faculties, it has never had, and I hope will never have, a rival. Far from fostering the growth of those great expansive instincts—sympathetic, æsthetic, and scientific—which Nature has implanted in every child, it set itself to extirpate them, one and all, with ruthless pertinacity. As a partial compensation for this work of wanton destruction, it made the child blindly obedient, mechanically industrious, and (within very narrow limits) accurate and thorough. I have described it at some length because I see clearly that no one who does not realise what the elementary school used to be, in the days of its sojourn in the Land of Bondage,

can even begin to understand why it is what it is to-day.

Having for thirty-three years deprived the teachers of almost every vestige of freedom, the Department suddenly reversed its policy and gave them in generous measure the boon which it had so long withheld. Whether it was wise to give so much at so short a notice may be doubted. What is beyond dispute is that it was unwise to expect so great and so unexpected a gift to be used at once to full advantage. A man who had grown accustomed to semi-darkness would be dazzled to the verge of blindness if he were suddenly taken out into broad daylight. This is what was done in 1895 to the teachers of England, and it is not to be wondered at that many of them have been purblind ever since. For thirty-three years they had been treated as machines, and they were suddenly asked to act as intelligent beings. For thirty-three years they had been practically compelled to do everything for the child, and they were suddenly expected to give him freedom and responsibility,—words which for many of them had well-nigh lost their meaning. To comply with these unreasonable demands was beyond their power. The grooves into which they had been forced were far too deep for them. The routine to which they had become accustomed had far too strong a hold on them. The one change which they could make was to relax their own severe pressure on the child. This they did, perhaps without intending to do it. Indeed, now that there was no external examination to look forward to, the pressure on the child

may be said to have automatically relaxed itself. What happened—I will not say in all schools, but in far too many—was that the teaching remained as mechanical and unintelligent as ever, that the teacher continued to distrust the child and to do everything for him, but that the child gradually became slacker and less industrious. Not that his teacher wished him to "slack," but that the stimulus of the yearly examination had been withdrawn at a time when there was nothing to take its place. Exercise is in itself a delightful thing when it is wholesome, natural, and rational; but when it is unwholesome, unnatural, and irrational, it will not be taken in sufficient measure except in response to some strong external stimulus. Under the old examination system an adequate stimulus had been supplied by the combined influence of competition and fear (chiefly the latter). When the examination system was abolished, that stimulus necessarily lost its point. Had it then been possible for the teacher to make the exercise which his pupils were asked to take wholesome, natural, and rational, a new stimulus—that of interest in their work—would have been applied to the pupils, and they would have exerted themselves as they had never done before. But it was not possible for the average teacher to execute at a moment's notice a complete change of front, and it was unwise of the Department to expect him to do so. Apart from an honourable minority, who had always been in secret revolt against the despotism of the Code, the old teachers were helpless and hopeless. The younger ones had been through the mill themselves, first in the Elementary School, then in the Pupil-Teacher

Centre, and then in the Training College (both the latter having been in too many cases cramming establishments like the Elementary School); and when they went back to work under a head teacher who was wedded to the old order of things, they found no difficulty in falling in with his ways and carrying out his wishes. If a young teacher, fresh from an exceptionally enlightened Training College, became an assistant under an old-fashioned head teacher, he soon had the "nonsense knocked out of him," and was compelled to toe the line with the rest of the staff.

But it was not only because the teachers of England had got accustomed to the Land of Bondage, that they shrank from entering the Promised Land. There was, and still is, another and a stronger reason. Wherever the teacher looks, he sees that the examination system, with its demand for machine-made results, controls education; and he feels that it is only by an accident that his school has been exempted (in part at least) from its pressure. The Board of Education still examine for labour certificates, for admission as uncertificated assistants, for the teacher's certificate. They expect head teachers to hold terminal examinations of all the classes in their schools. They allow Local Authorities to examine children in their schools as formally and as stringently as they please, and to hold examinations for County Scholarships, for which children from elementary schools are eligible. Admission to secondary schools of all grades depends on success in passing entrance examinations. So does admission to the various Colleges and Universities. In the schools which prepare

little boys for the "Great Public Schools," the whole scheme of education is dominated by the headmaster's desire to win as many entrance scholarships as possible. In the "Great Public Schools" the scheme of education is similarly dominated by the headmaster's desire to win as many scholarships as possible at the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. In the Universities all the undergraduates without exception are reading for examinations of various kinds,—pass "schools," honour "schools," Civil Service examinations, and the like. Officers in the Army and Navy have never done with examinations; and there is not a single profession which can be entered through any door but that of a public examination. Wherever the teacher looks he sees that examinations are held in high honour, and that the main business of teachers of all grades is to produce results which an outside examiner would accept as satisfactory; and he naturally takes for granted that the production of such results is the true function of the teacher, whether his success in producing them is to be tested by a formal examination or not. The air that he breathes is charged with ideas—ideas about life in general and education in particular—which belong to the order of things that he is supposed to have left behind him, and are fiercely antagonistic to those as yet unrecognised ideas which give the new order of things its meaning, its purpose, and its value.

How can we expect the teacher to look inward when all the conditions of his existence, not as a teacher only but also as a citizen and a man, conspire to make him look outward? But if the Fates

are against his looking inward, to what purpose has he been emancipated from the direct control of a system which had at least the merit of being in line with all the central tendencies of Western civilisation? How does it profit him to be free if, under the pressure of those tendencies, the chief use that he makes of his freedom is to grind out from his pupils results akin to those which were asked for in the days of schedules and percentages? Freedom was given him in order that he might be free to take thought for the vital welfare of his pupils. Or, if freedom was not given to him for that purpose, it were better that it had been withheld from him until those who were able to give or withhold it had formed a juster conception of its meaning.

The truth is that the exemption of the elementary school, and of it alone among schools, from the direct pressure of the examination system, is an isolated and audacious experiment, which is carried on under conditions so unfavourable to its success that nothing but a high degree of intelligence and moral courage (not to speak of originality) on the part of the teacher can make it succeed. Can we wonder that in many cases the experiment has proved a failure?

At the end of the previous chapter I asked myself whether the education that was given in the ordinary elementary school tended to foster self-expression on the part of the child. We can now see what the answer to this question is likely to be. For a third of a century—from 1862 to 1895—self-expression on the part of the child may be said to have been formally prohibited by all who were

responsible for the elementary education of the children of England, and also to have been prohibited *de facto* by all the unformulated conditions under which the elementary school was conducted. In 1895 the formal prohibition of self-expression ceased, but the *de facto* prohibition of it in the ordinary school is scarcely less effective to-day than it was in the darkest days of the old *régime*. For

"The evil that men do lives after them,"

and the old *régime*, though nominally abrogated, overshadows us still. When I say this I do not merely mean that many teachers who were brought up under the old *régime* have been unable to emancipate themselves from its influence. I mean that the old *régime* was itself the outcome and expression of traditional tendencies which are of the essence of Western civilisation, of ways of thinking and acting to which we are all habituated from our earliest days, and that these tendencies and these ways of thinking and acting overshadow us still. The formal abrogation of the old *régime* counts for little so long as the examination system, with its demand for visible and measurable results and its implicit invitation to cram and cheat, is allowed to cast its deadly shadow on education as such,—and so long as the whole system on which the young of all classes and grades are educated is favourable to self-deception on the part of the teacher and fatal to sincerity on the part of the child. Constrained by every influence that is brought to bear upon him to judge according to the appearance of things, the teacher can ill afford

to judge righteous judgment,—can ill afford to regard what is outward and visible as the symbol of what is inward and spiritual, can ill afford to think of the work done by the child except as a thing to be weighed in an examiner's balance or measured by an examiner's rule.

Things being as they are in the various grades of education and in the various strata of social life, it is inevitable that the education given in many of our elementary schools should be based, in the main, on complete distrust of the child. In such schools, whatever else the child may be allowed to do, he must not be allowed to do anything by or for himself. He must not express what he really feels and sees; for if he does, the results will probably fall short of the standard of neatness, cleanness, and correctness which an examiner might expect the school to reach. At any rate, the experiment is much too risky to be tried. In the lower classes the results produced would certainly be rough, imperfect, untidy. Therefore self-expression must not be permitted in that part of the school. And if not there, it must not be permitted anywhere, for the longer it is delayed the greater will be the difficulty of starting it and the greater the attendant risk. The child must not express what he really perceives; and as genuine perception forces for itself the outlet of genuine expression, he must not be allowed to exercise his perceptive faculties. Instead of seeing things for himself, he must see what his teacher directs him to see, he must feel what his teacher directs him to feel, he must think what his teacher directs him to think, and so on. But to forbid a child to use his own

perceptive faculties is to arrest the whole process of his growth.

I will now go back to the *Arithmetic* lesson. During the years in which the children in elementary schools were examined individually in reading, writing, and arithmetic, the one virtue which was inculcated while the arithmetic lesson was in progress was that of obedience to the formulated rule. On the yearly examination day it was customary to give each child four questions in arithmetic, of which only one was a "problem." Two sums correctly worked secured a "pass"; and it was therefore possible for the child to achieve salvation in arithmetic by blindly obeying the various rules with which his teacher had equipped him. He had, indeed, to decide for himself in each case which rule was to be followed; but he did this (in most schools), not by thinking the matter out, but by following certain by-rules given him by his teacher, which were based on a careful study of the wording of the questions set by the inspector, and which held good as long as that wording remained unchanged. For example, if a subtraction sum was to be dictated to "Standard II," the child was taught that the number which was given out first was to be placed in the upper line, and that the number which came next was to be subtracted from this. He was not taught that the lesser of the two numbers was always to be subtracted from the larger; for in order to apply that principle he would have had to decide for himself which was the larger of the two numbers, and the consequent mental effort was one which his teacher could not trust him

to make. It is true that in his desire to save the child from the dire necessity of thinking, the teacher ran the risk of being discomfited by a sudden change of procedure on the part of an inspector. The inspector, for example, who, having been accustomed to say "From 95 take 57," chose to say, for a change, "Take 57 from 95," would cause widespread havoc in the first two or three schools that were the victims of his unlooked-for experiment. But the risks which the teacher ran who taught his pupils to rely on trickery rather than thought were worth running; for the inspectors, like the teachers and the children, were ever tending to become creatures of routine, and the vagaries of those who had the reputation of being tiresomely versatile could be provided against—largely, if not wholly—by increased ingenuity on the part of the teacher, and increased attention to tricky by-rules on the part of the child.

The number of schools in which arithmetic is intelligently and even practically taught is undoubtedly much larger than it was in the days of payment by results; but there are still thousands of schools in which obedience to the rule for its own sake is the basis of all instruction in arithmetic. Now to live habitually by rule instead of by thought is necessarily fatal, in every field of action, to the development of that *sense*, or perceptive faculty, on which right action ultimately depends. Following his reputed guide blindly, mechanically, and with whole-hearted devotion, the votary of the rule never allows his intuition, his faculty of direct perception and subconscious judgment, to play even for a moment round the matters

on which he is engaged; and the result is that the faculty in question is not merely prevented from growing, but is at last actually blighted in the bud. This is but another way of saying what I have already insisted upon,—that to forbid self-expression on the part of the child is to starve his perceptive faculties into non-existence.

There is no folly perpetrated in the elementary school of to-day for which there are not authoritative precedents to be found in the conduct of one or other of the two great schools which the God of Western theology is supposed to have opened for the education of Man. And it is in that special development of the Legal School which is known as Pharisaism that we shall look for a precedent for the conventional teaching of arithmetic in our elementary schools. The ultra-legalism of the Pharisee in the days of Christ finds its exact counterpart in the ultra-legalism of the child who has been taught arithmetic by the methods which the yearly examination fostered, and which are still widely prevalent. In the one case there was, in the other case there is, an entire inability on the part of the zealous votary of the rule to estimate the intrinsic value of the results of his blind and unintelligent action. The sense of humour, which is a necessary element in every other healthy sense, and which so often keeps us from going astray, by suddenly revealing to us the inherent absurdity of our proposed action, is one of the first faculties to succumb to the blighting influence of an ultra-legal conception of life. As an example of the unwavering seriousness of the Pharisee in the presense of what was intrinsically ridiculous, let us

take his attitude towards the problem of keeping food warm for the Sabbath day. "According to Exodus xvi. 23, it was forbidden to bake and to boil on the Sabbath. Hence the food, which it was desired to eat hot on the Sabbath, was to be prepared before its commencement, and kept warm by artificial means. In doing this, however, care must be taken that the existing heat was not increased, which would have been 'boiling.' Hence the food must be put only into such substances as would maintain its heat, not into such as might possibly increase it. 'Food to be kept warm for the Sabbath must not be put into oil-dregs, manure, salt, chalk, or sand, whether moist or dry, nor into straw, grape-skins, flock, or vegetables, if these are damp, though it may if they are dry. It may, however, be put into clothes, amidst fruits, pigeons' feathers, and flax tow. R. Jehudah declares flax tow unallowable and permits only coarse tow.'"[1] Following his rule out, step by step, with unflinching loyalty, into these ridiculous consequences, the Pharisee had entirely lost the power of seeing that they were ridiculous, and was well content to believe, with Jehudah, that the difference between keeping food warm in coarse tow and in flax tow was the difference between life and death. This *reductio ad absurdum* of legalism is exactly paralleled, in many of our elementary schools, in the answers to arithmetical questions given by the children. The "Fifth Standard" boys who told their inspector, as an answer to an easy problem, that a given room was five shillings and sixpence

[1] *The Jewish People in the time of Jesus Christ*, by Dr. Emil Schürer.

wide, had followed out their rule—they had unfortunately got hold of a wrong rule—step by step, till it led them to a conclusion, the intrinsic absurdity of which they were one and all unable to see.[1] There are many elementary schools in England in which a majority of the answers given to quite easy problems would certainly be wrong, and a respectable minority of them ludicrously wrong. Nor is this to be wondered at; for though the types of problems that can be set in elementary schools are not numerous, to provide his pupils with the by-rules which shall enable them in all, or even in most cases, to determine which of the recognised rules are appropriate to the given situation, passes the wit of the teacher. But if the helplessness of so many elementary scholars in the face of an arithmetical problem is lamentable, still more lamentable is the fact that the scholar is seldom met with who, having given an entirely wrong answer to an easy problem, is able to see for himself that, whatever the right answer may be, the answer given is and must be wrong. So fatal to the development of the arithmetical sense is the current worship of the rule for its own sake, and so deadly a narcotic is the conventional arithmetic lesson to all who take part in it!

[1] Here is another example of the mental blindness which rule-worship in Arithmetic is apt to induce. The boys in a large "Standard II," who had been spending the whole year in adding, subtracting, multiplying, and dividing tens of thousands, were given the following sum: A farmer had 126 sheep. He bought nine. How many had he then? Out of 50 boys, one only worked the sum correctly. Of the remaining 49, about a third *multiplied* 126 by 9, another third *divided* 126 by 9, while the remaining third *subtracted* 9 from 126.

It is not in the arithmetic lesson, then, that provision is ordinarily made for the development of a sense, or perceptive faculty, through the medium of self-expression on the part of the child. On the contrary, the very *raison d'être* of the arithmetic lesson, as it is still given in many schools, is to destroy the arithmetical sense, and make the child an inefficient calculating machine, which, even when working, is too often inaccurate and clumsy, and which the slightest change of environment throws at once and completely out of gear.

After the arithmetical lesson come, as a rule, lessons in "*Reading*" and "*Writing*"—in reading in some classes, in writing in others. The first thing that strikes the visitor who enters an ordinary elementary school while a reading lesson is in progress, is that the children are not reading at all, in the accepted sense of the word. They are not reading to themselves, not studying, not mastering the contents of the book, not assimilating the mental and spiritual nutriment that it may be supposed to contain. They are standing up, one by one, even in the highest class of all, and reading aloud to their teacher.

Why are they doing this? Is it in order that their teacher may show them how to master the more difficult words in their reading lesson? This may be the reason, in some schools; but there are others, perhaps a majority, in which the teacher tells his pupils the words that puzzle them instead of helping them to make them out for themselves. Besides, if reading were properly taught in the lower classes, the children in the upper classes

would surely be able to master unaided the difficulties that might confront them.

Or is it in order that elocution may be cultivated? But elocution is seldom, if ever, cultivated in the ordinary elementary school, the veriest mumbling on the part of the child being accepted by his teacher (who follows him with an open book in his hand), provided that he can read correctly and with some attempt at "phrasing." Indeed, the indistinct utterance of so many school children may be attributed to the fact that they have read aloud to their teachers for many years, and that during the whole of that time a very low standard of distinctness has been accepted as satisfactory.

Or is it in order that the teacher may help his pupils to understand what they are reading? This may be one of his reasons for hearing them read aloud; but so far as the higher classes are concerned it is a bad reason, for the older the child the more imperative is it that he should try to make out for himself the meaning of what he reads; and the teacher who spoon-feeds his pupils during the reading lesson is doing his best to make them incapable of digesting the contents of books for themselves.

No, there are two chief reasons why the teacher makes children of eleven, twelve, thirteen and fourteen years of age read aloud to him as if they were children of six or seven. The first reason is that the unemancipated teacher instinctively does to-day what he did twenty years ago, and that twenty years ago, when children were examined in reading from their own books, the teacher heard them read aloud, day after day in order that he might make sure

that they knew their books well enough to pass the inspector's test. The second reason, which is wider than the first, and may be said to include and account for it, is that the reading-aloud lesson fits in with the whole system of Western education, being the outcome and expression of that complete distrust of the child which is, and always has been, characteristic of the popular religion and philosophy of the West. If you ask the teacher why the children, even in the highest classes, are never allowed to work at such subjects as history and geography by themselves, he will tell you frankly that he cannot trust them to do so, that they do not know how to use a book. And he cannot see that in giving this excuse he is condemning himself, and making open confession of the worthlessness of the training that he has given to his pupils.

Whatever else the reading-aloud lesson may be, it is a dismal waste of time. Child after child stands up, reads for a minute or so, and then sits down, remaining idle and inert (except when an occasional question is addressed to him) for the rest of the time occupied by the so-called lesson. In this, as in most oral lessons, the elementary school child passes much of his time in a state which is neither activity nor rest,—a state of enforced inertness combined with unnatural and unceasing strain. Activity is good for the child, and rest, which is the complement of activity, is good for the child; but the combination of inertness with strain is good for neither his body nor his mind. Indeed, it may be doubted if there is any state of mind and body which is so uneducational as this, or so unfavourable to healthy growth.

But the main objection to the reading-aloud lesson is, I repeat, that while it is going on the children are not reading at all, in the proper sense of the word, not attacking the book, not enjoying it, not extracting the honey from it. And the consequences of the inability to read which is thus engendered are far-reaching and disastrous. The power to read is a key which unlocks many doors. One of the most important of these doors—perhaps, from the strictly scholastic point of view, *the* most important—is the door of study. The child who cannot read to himself cannot study a book, cannot master its contents. It is because the elementary school child cannot be trusted to do any independent study, that the oral lesson, or lecture, with its futile expenditure of "chalk and talk," is so prominent a feature in the work of the elementary school. And it is because the oral lesson necessarily counts for so much, that the over-grouping of classes, with all its attendant evils, is so widely practised. The grouping together of "Standards" V, VI, and VII, with the result that the children who go through all those Standards are compelled to waste the last two years of their school life, is a practice which is almost universal in elementary schools of a certain size. And there are few schools of that size in which those Standards could not be broken up into two, if not three, independent classes, if the children, whose ages range as a rule between eleven and fourteen, could be trusted to work by themselves. In many cases this over-grouping is wholly inexcusable, the headmaster having no class of his own to teach, and being therefore free to do what obviously ought to be

done,—to separate the older and more advanced children from the rest of the top class, and form them into a separate class (a real top class) for independent study and self-education under his direction and supervision. But so strong is the force of habit, and so deeply rooted in the mind of the teacher is distrust of the child, that it is rare to find the head teacher to whom the idea of breaking up an over-grouped top class has suggested itself as practicable, or even as intrinsically desirable.

We owe it, then, to the reading-aloud fetich that in many of our schools the children are compelled to spend the last two (or even three) years of their school life—the most important years of all from the point of view of their preparation for the battle of life—in marking time, in staying where they were. It is to those years of enforced stagnation that the reluctance of the ex-elementary scholar to go on with his education is largely due; for no one can keep on moving who is not already on the move, and the desire to continue education is scarcely to be looked for in one who has been given to understand that his education has come to an end. But there is another and a shorter cut from the conventional reading lesson to the early extinction of the child's educational career. The child who leaves school without having learned how to use a book, will find that the one door through which access is gained to most of the halls of learning—the door of independent study—is for ever slammed in his face. Not that he will seriously try to open it; for with the ability to read the desire to read will have aborted. The distrust of the child, on which Western education is based, is a bottomless gulf

in which educational effort, whatever form it may take or in whatever quarter it may originate, is for the most part swallowed up and made as though it had not been. The child who leaves school at the age of fourteen will have attended some 2,000 or 3,000 reading lessons in the course of his school life. From these, in far too many cases, he will have carried nothing away but the ability to stumble with tolerable correctness through printed matter of moderate difficulty. He will not have carried away from them either the power or the desire to read.

In the days of percentages, instruction in "*Writing*" below Standard V was entirely confined to handwriting and spelling; and even in the higher Standards the teacher thought more about handwriting and spelling than any other aspect of this composite subject. Now handwriting and spelling are merely means to an end;—the end of making clear to the reader the words that have been committed to paper by the writer. But it is the choice rather than the setting out of words that really matters, and the name that we give to the choosing of words is Composition. The excessive regard that has always been paid in our elementary schools to neat handwriting and correct spelling is characteristic of the whole Western attitude towards education. No "results" are more easily or more accurately appraised than these, and it follows that no "results" are more highly esteemed by the unenlightened teacher. For wherever the outward standard of reality has established itself at the expense of the inward, the ease with which worth

(or what passes for such) can be measured is ever tending to become in itself the chief, if not the sole, measure of worth. And in proportion as we tend to value the results of education for their measureableness, so we tend to undervalue and at last to ignore those results which are too intrinsically valuable to be measured.

Hence the neglect of *Composition* in so many elementary schools. I mean by composition the sincere expression in language of the child's genuine thoughts and feelings. The effort to "compose," whether orally or on paper, is one of the most educational of all efforts; for language is at once the most readily available and the most subtle and sympathetic of all media of expression; and the effort to express himself in it tends, in proportion as it is sincere and strong, to give breadth, depth, and complexity to the child's thoughts and feelings, and through the development of these to weave his experiences into the tissue of his life. But sincerity of expression is not easily measured, and the true value of the thoughts and feelings that are struggling to express themselves in a child's composition is beyond the reach of any rule or scale; whereas neatness of handwriting and correctness of spelling are, as we have seen, features which appeal even to the carelessly observant eye.

Knowing this, the teacher takes care that the exercise-books of his pupils shall be filled with neat and accurate composition exercises, and that some of the neatest and most accurate of these shall be exhibited on the walls of his school. The visitor whose eye ranges over these exercises and

goes no further may be excused if he forms a highly favourable opinion of the school which can produce such seemingly excellent work. But let him spend a morning in the school, and see how these "results" have been produced. He will probably change his mind as to their value. The teaching of composition in the ordinary elementary school is too often fraudulent and futile. Indeed, there is no lesson in which the teacher's traditional distrust of the child goes further than in this. In the lower classes the child is taught how to construct simple sentences (as if he had never made one in the previous course of his life), and he is not trusted to do more than this. He listens to a so-called object lesson, and when it is over he is told to write a few simple sentences about the Cow or the Horse, or whatever the subject of the lesson may have been; and lest his memory (the only faculty which he is allowed to exercise) should fail him, the chief landmarks of the lesson are placed before him on the blackboard. This string of simple sentences reproduced from memory passes muster as composition. And yet that child began to practise oral composition at the age of eighteen months, and at the age of three was able to use complex sentences with freedom and skill. In the upper classes the composition is too often as mechanical, as unreal, and as insincere as in the lower. Sometimes a given subject is worked out by the teacher with the class, the children, one by one, suggesting sentences, which are shaped and corrected by the teacher and then written up on the blackboard, until there are enough of them to fill one page of an ordinary exercise book. Then the whole essay

(if one must dignify it with that name) is copied out, very neatly and carefully, by every child in the class; and the result is shown to the inspector as original composition. At other times or in other schools the class teacher does not go quite so far as this. He contents himself with talking the subject over with the class, and then writing a series of headings [1] on the blackboard. Or, again, trusting to the child's red-hot memory, he will allow him to write out what he remembers of an object-lesson, or a history lesson, or whatever it may be. Composition exercises which are the genuine expression of genuine perception, which have behind them what the child has experienced, what he has felt or thought, what he has read, what he has studied, are the exception rather than the rule; for in such exercises there would probably be faults of spelling, faults of grammar, colloquialisms, careless writing (due to the child's eagerness), and so forth; and the work would therefore be unsatisfactory from the showman's point of view. The child's natural capacity for expressing himself in language is systematically starved in order that

[1] Reinforced in many cases by suggestive words. I recently found myself in an urban school while the "Fourth Standard" boys were doing "Composition." The subject—Trees—had already been dealt with in a preparatory "talk." In front of the class was a blackboard, on which were written the following words:

"fruit, flowers,

I. *Roots* tough, strong, stretch, extend.
II. *Trunk* thick, branches, bark.
III. *Branches* strong, tough, leaves.
IV. *Leaves* green, shapes, sizes, beautiful, clothe, autumn, brown."

I am told that sometimes as many as twelve headings are given, each with its own list of suggestive words.

outward and visible results, results which will win approval from those who judge according to the appearance of things, may be duly produced.

The case of oral composition in the unemancipated elementary school is even more hopeless than that of written composition. The latter has a time set apart for it on the time-table, and is at any rate supposed to be taught. The former is wholly ignored. Many teachers seem to have entirely forgotten that the desire and the ability to talk are part of the normal equipment of every healthy child. There was, indeed, a time when children were taught to answer questions in complete sentences even when one-word answers would have amply sufficed. For example, when a child was asked how many pence there were in a shilling, he was expected to answer, "There are twelve pence in a shilling"; when he was asked what was the colour of snow, he was expected to answer, "The colour of snow is white"; and so on. And both he and his teacher flattered themselves that this waste of words was oral composition! In point of fact the sentence in each of these cases was worth no more, as an effort of self-expression, than its one important word—*twelve, white,* or whatever it might be; and the child, who was allowed to think that he had produced a real sentence, had in effect done no more than envelop one real word in a hollow formula. There are still many schools in which this ridiculous practice lingers, and in which it constitutes the only attempt at oral composition that the child is allowed to make. Where it has died out the idea of teaching oral composition has too often died with it. Young children are, as a

rule, voluble talkers, with a considerable command of language. But it not infrequently happens that at the close of his school life the once talkative child has lapsed into a state of sullen taciturnity. In common with other vital faculties, his power of expressing himself in speech has withered in the repressive atmosphere to which he has so long been exposed.

It is in the oral lesson that one would expect oral composition to be taught or at any rate practised. In such subjects as *History, Geography, English, Elementary Science,* the teaching in most elementary schools is mainly, if not wholly, oral. In the days of payment by results separate and variable grants were given for these subjects; and which, if either, of two grants should be recommended depended in each case on the result of an oral examination conducted by H.M. Inspector, the employment of a written test in any class being strictly forbidden by "My Lords." In this examination proof of the possession of information was all that the inspector could demand; and the quickest and easiest way of obtaining such proof was to ask the class questions which could be briefly answered by the children individually. Questions which were designed to test intelligence might, of course, have been asked, and in some districts were freely asked; but to have reduced the grant because the children failed to answer these would have provoked an outcry; while, had the inspector asked questions which demanded long answers, he would, in the limited time at his command, have given but few children the chance of

showing that they had been duly prepared for the examination. The consequence was that the oral lesson on a "class subject" usually took the form of stuffing the children with pellets of appropriate information, some of which they would, in all probability, have the opportunity of disgorging when they were questioned by the inspector on the yearly "parade day."

Not only, then, did the official examination in history, geography and elementary science direct the teaching of these subjects into channels in which the golden opportunities that they offer for the practice of written composition were perforce thrown away, but also the examination was so framed that even the practice of oral composition, in preparation for it, was actively discouraged. And the neglect of composition acted disastrously on the teaching of the subjects in question; for wherever self-expression on the part of the child is forbidden, the appropriate "sense," or perceptive faculty, cannot possibly evolve itself,—perception and expression being, as we have elsewhere seen, the very life and soul of each other; and in the absence (to take pertinent examples) of the historical or the geographical sense, the possession of historical or geographical information cannot possibly be converted into knowledge of history or geography. The prompt, accurate, and general answering which was rewarded by the award of the higher grants for "class subjects" was, in nine cases out of ten, the outcome of assiduous and unintelligent cram,—a mode of preparation for which the policy of the Education Department was mainly responsible.

But when separate grants ceased to be paid for class subjects, were not the teachers free to teach them by rational methods? No doubt they were—in theory. In point of fact they were in bondage to the strongest of all constraining influences,—the force of inveterate habit. For twenty years they had taught the class subjects by the one safe method of vigorous oral cram. This method had answered their purpose, and it was but natural that they should continue to teach by it. What happened, when separate grants ceased to be paid, was that the need for responsiveness on the part of the scholar gradually lessened. The pellets of information were still imparted, but it became less and less incumbent upon the teacher to see that his pupils were ready to disgorge them at a moment's notice. And so the cramming lesson gradually transformed itself into a *lecture*, in which the teacher did all or nearly all the talking, while the children sat still and listened or pretended to listen, an occasional yawn giving open proof of the boredom from which most of them were suffering.

That is the type of oral lesson which is most common at the present day. "Results" in history, geography, nature study and English are seldom asked for by the inspector; and the teacher takes but little trouble to produce them. But his distrust of the child is as firmly rooted as ever, and his unwillingness to allow the child to work by or for himself is as strong as it ever was. The consequence is that there are many schools in which the teacher now does everything during the oral lesson, while the child does as nearly as possible

nothing. Formerly the child was at any rate allowed (or rather required) to be actively receptive. Now he is seldom allowed to do anything more active than to yawn. And all the time he is secretly longing to energise—to do something with himself—to use his mental, if not his physical faculties—to work, if not to play. One might have thought that in the history and geography lessons, if in no other, "Standards VI" and "VII" (where the numbers were too small to admit of these standards having a teacher to themselves) would be separated from "Standard V," and allowed to work out their own salvation by studying suitable text-books under proper supervision and guidance. But no; the force of habit is too strong for the machine-made teacher. Twenty years ago history and geography were "class subjects," and as such were taught orally to whole classes of children. And they must still be taught as "class subjects," even if this should involve the "Sixth" and "Seventh Standards" being brigaded with, and kept down for one or even two years to, the level of the "Fifth,"—kept down, it would seem, for no other purpose than that of being the passive recipients of the teacher's windy "talk," and the helpless witnesses of his futile "chalk," and of having their own activities paralysed and their own powers of expression starved into inanition.

I will deal with one more "secular" subject before I bring this sketch to a close. There are still many schools in which the hours that are set apart for *Drawing* are devoted in large measure to the slavish reproduction of flat copies. A picture

of some familiar object—outlined, shaded, or tinted as the case may be, and not infrequently highly conventionalised—hangs in front of the class; and the children copy it, stroke by stroke, and curve by curve, and put in the shading and lay on washes of colour. As long practice at work of this kind develops a certain degree of manual dexterity, and as the free use of india-rubber is permitted and even encouraged, the child's finished work may be so neat and accurate as to become worthy of a place on the school wall. But what is the value, what is the meaning of work of this kind? When such a drawing lesson as I have described is in progress, the divorce between perception and expression is complete. And as each of these master faculties is the very life and soul of the other, their complete divorce from one another involves the complete eclipse of each. The child who copies a flat copy does not perceive anything except some other person's reproduction of a scene or object; and even this he does not necessarily grasp as a whole, his business being to reproduce it with flawless accuracy, line by line. Indeed, it may well happen that he does not even know what the picture or diagram before him is intended to represent. Nor is he expressing anything, for he has not made his model in any sense or degree his own. Thus, during the whole of a lesson in which the perceptive and expressive faculties are supposed to be receiving a special training, they are lying dormant and inert. Each of them is, for the time being, as good as dead. And each of them will assuredly die if this kind of teaching goes on for very long, die for lack of exercise, die wasted and

atrophied by disuse. The extent to which the copying of copies can injure a child's power of observation exceeds belief. I have seen a bowl placed high above the line of sight of a class of fifty senior boys, each one of whom (his memory being haunted, I suppose, by some diagram which he had once copied) drew it as if he were looking into it from above. Not one of those boys could see the bowl as it really was, or rather as it really was to be seen. A child who had never drawn a stroke in his life, but whose perceptive faculties had not been deadened by education, would have sketched the bowl more correctly than any of those quasi-experts. And with the wasting of the power of observation, the executive power is gradually lost; for perception is ever interpenetrating, reinforcing, and stimulating expression; and when the eye is blind, the hand, however skilful its mere manipulation may be, necessarily falters and loses its cunning.

Four or five years ago, had one entered an elementary school while drawing was being taught, such a lesson as I have just described would have been in progress in ninety-nine cases out of every hundred. Since then a systematic warfare has been waged by the Board against the "flat copy"; and though it is still very far from extinct, there is now perhaps an actual majority of schools in which its use has been discontinued. But the number of schools in which drawing from the object is effectively taught, though increasing steadily, is still small. In those schools, indeed, the results are surprisingly good,—so good as to justify, not only the new gospel of drawing from the object, but also the whole gospel of education through self-reliance

and self-expression. But elsewhere there has been but little improvement, except so far as it may be better to draw from an object without guidance, or with quite ineffective guidance, than to draw from a flat copy. In some schools the formula or "tip" is beginning to take the place of the flat copy. There is a formula for the tulip, a formula for the snowdrop, a formula for the daffodil, and so on; and the children draw from these formulæ while the actual flowers are before them and they are making believe to reproduce them. In other schools an object is placed before the class, and the teacher draws this for them on the blackboard, explaining to them in detail how it ought to be drawn; and when he has finished, the children pretend to draw the object, but really copy his blackboard copy of it. In this, as in other matters, the teacher who has become a victim of routine will give a facile but mainly "notional" assent to the suggestions that are placed before him, will promise to try them, and will make an unintelligent and half-hearted attempt to do so, but will as often as not slide back into practices which do not materially differ from those which he professes to have abandoned. The pressure of the whole system of Western education—not to speak of Western civilisation—will be too strong for him. The flat copy, with its demand for mechanical work and servile obedience, fits into that system. Drawing from the object, with its demand for initiative and self-reliance, does not. Hence the attractive force of the former,—a secret attractive force which will neutralise the efforts that the teacher consciously makes to free himself from its influence, and will arm him, as with a hidden shirt of mail, against

the missionary zeal of his inspector.[1] Even the zeal of the inspector will be affected by his possible inability to harmonise his gospel of self-expression in drawing with any general system of self-education. It is because the educational reformer is fighting, in his sporadic attempts at reform, against his own deepest conviction, that he achieves so little even in the particular directions in which he sees clearly that reform is needed.

But how, it will be asked, is such a school as I have described to be kept going? The whole *régime* must be eminently distasteful to the healthy child, and it can scarcely be attractive to his teacher. By what motive force, then, is the school to be kept in motion,—in motion, if not along the path of progress, at any rate along the well-worn track of routine? By the only motive force which the religion and the civilisation of the West recognise as effective,—the hope of external reward, with its complement, the fear of external punishment.

[1] I was recently present at a large gathering of teachers who had assembled to discuss the teaching of Drawing and other kindred topics. The district is one in which the gospel of self-help in Drawing has been preached with diligence and with much apparent success. One of the teachers, who was expected to support the Board in their crusade against the "flat copy," played the part of Balaam by reading out letters from certain distinguished R.A.'s, in which the use of the flat copy in elementary schools was openly advocated. It was evident that those distinguished R.A.'s knew as much about elementary education as the man in the street knows about naval tactics, for the arguments by which they supported their paradoxical opinions were worth exactly nothing. But the salvos of applause, renewed again and again, which greeted the extracts from their letters showed clearly in which direction the current of subconscious conviction was running in that evangelised and apparently converted district.

From highest to lowest, from the head teacher of the school to the youngest child in the bottom class, all the teachers and all the children are subjected to the pressure of this quasi-physical force. The teachers hope for advancement and increase of salary, and fear degradation and loss of salary, or at any rate loss of the hoped-for increment.[1] The children hope for medals, books, high places in their respective classes, and other rewards and distinctions, and fear corporal and other kinds of punishment. The thoroughly efficient school is one in which this motive force is duly transmitted to every part of the school by means of a well-planned and carefully-elaborated machinery, analogous to that by which water and gas are laid on at every tap in every house in a well-governed town. Only those who are intimately acquainted with the inside of the elementary school can realise to what an extent the machinery of education has in recent years encroached upon the vital interests of the school and the time and thought of the teacher. In schools which are administered by business-like and up-to-date Local Authorities, this encroachment is becoming as serious as that of drifting sands on a fertile soil. Time-tables, schemes of work, syllabuses, record books, progress books, examination result books, and the rest,—hours and hours are spent by the teachers on the clerical work which these mechanical contrivances demand. And the hours so spent are too often wholly wasted. The worst

[1] There are few teachers who do not also work from higher motives than these; but there are very few who are exempt from the pressure of these.

of this machinery is that, so long as it works smoothly, all who are interested in the school are satisfied. But it may all work with perfect smoothness, and yet achieve nothing that really counts. I know of hundreds of schools which are to all appearance thoroughly efficient,—schools in which the machinery of education is as well contrived as it is well oiled and cleaned,—and yet in which there is no vital movement, no growth, no life. From highest to lowest, all the inmates of those schools are cheating themselves with forms, figures, marks, and other such empty symbols.

The application of the conventional motive force to the school children goes by the name of *Discipline*. If the pressure at each tap is steady, constant, and otherwise effective, the discipline is good. If it is variable, intermittent, and otherwise ineffective, the discipline is bad. The life of the routine-ridden school is so irksome to the child, that if he is healthy and vigorous he will long to find a congenial outlet for his vital energies, which are as a rule either pent back (as when he sits still listening to a lecture), or forced into uninteresting and unprofitable channels. When this desire masters him during school hours, it goes by the name of "naughtiness," and is regarded as a proof of the inborn sinfulness of his "fallen" nature. To repress the desire, to keep the child in a state either of absolute inaction or of mechanically regulated activity, is the function of school discipline. Whatever in the child's life is free, natural, spontaneous, wells up from an evil source. If educational progress is to be made, that source must be carefully sealed. As an educator, the teacher must

do his best to reduce the child to the level of a wire-pulled puppet. As a disciplinarian, he must overcome the child's instinctive repugnance to being subjected to such unworthy treatment. The better the "discipline" of the school, the easier it will be for the mechanical education given in it to achieve its deadly work.

In making this sketch of what is still a common type of elementary school, my object has been to provide myself with materials for answering the question: Does elementary education, as at present conducted in this country, tend to foster the growth of the child's faculties? If my sketch is even approximately faithful to its original, the answer to the question, so far at least as thousands of schools are concerned, must be an emphatic No. For in the school, as I have sketched it, the one end and aim of the teacher is to prevent the child from doing anything whatever for himself; and where independent effort is prohibited, the growth of faculty must needs be arrested, the growth of every faculty, as of every limb and organ, being dependent in large measure on its being duly and suitably exercised by its owner. If this statement is true of faculty as such, and of effort as such, still more is it true of the particular faculties which school life is supposed to train, the faculties which we speak of loosely as perceptive,—and of the particular effort by which alone the growth of the perceptive faculties is effected, the many-sided effort which we speak of loosely as self-expression. For perception and expression are, as I have endeavoured to prove, the face and obverse of the

same vital process; and the educational policy which makes self-expression, or, in other words, sincere expression, impossible, is therefore fatal to the outgrowth of the whole range of the perceptive faculties.

The education given in thousands of our elementary schools is, then, in the highest degree anti-educational. The end which education ought to aim at achieving is the very end which the teacher labours unceasingly to defeat. The teacher may, indeed, contend that his business is not to evoke faculty but to impart knowledge. The answer to this argument is that the type of education which impedes the outgrowth of faculty is necessarily fatal to the acquisition of knowledge. For the teacher can no more impart knowledge to his pupils than a nurse can impart flesh and blood to her charges. What the teacher imparts is information, just as what the nurse imparts is food; and until information has been converted into knowledge the child is as far from being educated as the infant, whose food remains unassimilated, is from being nourished. The teacher may pump information into the child in a never-ending stream; but so long as he compels the child to adopt an attitude of passive receptivity, and forbids him to react, through the medium of self-expression, on the food that he is receiving, so long will the food remain unassimilated and even undigested, and the soul and mind of the child remain uneducated and unfed.

Whether, then, we concern ourselves, as educationalists, with the growth of the child's whole nature, or with the growth of his master faculties, or again with the growth of those special "senses" which evolve themselves in response to the stimulus

of special environments, we see that in each case the effect of the teacher's policy of distrust and repression is to arrest growth. When the stern supernaturalist reminds us that the child's nature is intrinsically evil, and that therefore in arresting its growth education renders him a priceless service, we answer that, in arresting the growth of the child's nature as a whole, education arrests the growth of all the master faculties of his being, and that there are some at least among these which, even in the judgment of the supernaturalist, imperatively need to be trained. When the strait-laced, result-hunting teacher reminds us that his sole business is to teach certain subjects, and that therefore he cannot concern himself with growth, we answer that, in neglecting to foster growth, he makes it impossible for the child to put forth a special "sense," a special faculty of direct perception, in response to each new environment, and so (for reasons which have already been given) incapacitates him for mastering any subject. There is always one point of view, if no more, from which my primary assumption—that the function of education is to foster growth—is seen to be a truism. And from that point of view, if from no other, the failure of the routine-ridden school to fulfil its destiny is seen to be final and complete.

Yet to say that elementary education, as it is given in such a school, tends to arrest growth, is to under-estimate its capacity for mischief. In the act of arresting growth it must needs distort growth, and in doing this it must needs deaden and even destroy the life which is ever struggling to evolve itself. It is well that from time to time we should ask ourselves what compulsory education

has done for the people of England. How much it has done to civilise and humanise the masses is beginning to be known to all who are interested in social progress, and I for one am ready to second any vote of thanks that may be proposed to it for this invaluable service.[1] But when we ask ourselves what it has done to *vitalise* the nation, we may well hesitate for an answer. Twenty years ago, in the days of "schedules" and "percentages," elementary education was, on balance, an actively *devitalising* agency. The policy of the Education Department made that inevitable. But things have changed since then; and it is probable that the balance is now in favour of the elementary school. But the balance, though growing from year to year, is as yet very small compared with what it will be when the teacher, relieved from the pressure of the still prevailing demand for "results," is free to take thought for the vital interests of the child.

Whom shall we blame for the shortcomings of our elementary schools? The Board of Education? Their Inspectors? The Teachers? The Training Colleges? The Local Authorities? We will blame none of these. We will blame the spirit of Western civilisation, with its false philosophy of life and its false standard of reality.

[1] It is pleasant to read that at Southend on Easter Monday (1910) there were 65,000 excursionists and only two cases of drunkenness. It is also pleasant to hear from an officer who has served for many years in India that the modern English private soldier in India is an infinitely superior being to his predecessors, and that India could not now be held by the old type of British soldier. We must not, however, forget that the "old type" conquered India.

Shall we blame the Board because, in the days when they called themselves the Department, they made the teachers of England the serfs of their soul-destroying Code? For my own part I prefer to honour the Board, not only because on a certain day they liberated their serfs by a departmental edict, but also and more especially because, in defiance of the protests and criticisms of Members of Parliament, employers of labour, Chairmen of Education Committees, and others, in defiance of the ubiquitous pressure of Western externalism and materialism, in defiance of the trend of contemporary opinion, in defiance of their own practice,—for they themselves are an examining body whose nets are widely spread,—they refuse to revoke the gift of freedom, which they gave, perhaps over-hastily, to the teachers of England, and continue to exempt them, so far as their own action is concerned, from the pressure of a formal examination on a uniform scheme of work.

Shall we blame the teachers as a body because too many of them are machine-made creatures of routine? For my own part I honour the teachers as a body, if only because here and there one of them has dared, with splendid courage, to defy the despotism of custom, of tradition, of officialdom, of the thousand deadening influences that are brought to bear upon him, and to follow for himself the path of inwardness and life. To blame the average teacher for being unable to resist the pressure to which he is unceasingly exposed would be almost as unfair as to blame a pebble on the seashore for being unable to resist the grinding action of the waves, and would ill become one who has

special reason to remember how the Department, in its misguided zeal for efficiency, strove for thirty years or more to grind the teachers of England to one pattern in the mill of "payment by results." It is to a certificated teacher that, as an educationalist (if I may give myself so formidable a title), "I owe my soul." And there are many other teachers to whom my debts, though less weighty than this, are by no means light. Most of the failings of the elementary teachers are wounds and strains which adverse Fate has inflicted on them. Most of their virtues are their own.

Shall we blame the Training Colleges because, with an unhappy past behind them, they have yet many things to unlearn?

Shall we blame the local Education Authorities because, with an unknown future before them, they have yet many things to learn?

No, I repeat, we will blame none of these. We will lay the blame on broader shoulders. We will blame our materialistic philosophy of life, which we complacently regard—orthodox and heretics alike—as "*The* truth"; and we will blame our materialised civilisation, which we complacently regard—cultured and uncultured alike—as civilisation, pure and simple, whatever lies beyond its confines being lightly dismissed as "barbarism." These are the forces against which every teacher, every manager, every inspector, who strives for emancipation and enlightenment, has to fight unceasingly. If the fight is an unequal one; if there are many would-be reformers who have shrunk from it; if there are others who retired from it early in the day; if there are others, again, who have been

crushed in it;—we will blame the forces of darkness for these disasters; we will not blame their victims. On the contrary, we will honour all who have fought and fallen; for when the cause is large and worthy of devotion, failure in the service of it is only less triumphant than success. But if there is honour for failure what shall be the guerdon of success? What tribute shall we pay to those who have fought and won?

For there are some who have fought and won.

PART II

WHAT MIGHT BE

OR

THE PATH OF SELF-REALISATION

CHAPTER IV

A SCHOOL IN UTOPIA

HAVING painted in gloomy colours some of the actualities of elementary education, I will now try to set forth its possibilities. In opposing the actual to the possible, I am perhaps running the risk of being misunderstood. The possible, as I conceive it, is no mere "fabric of a dream." What are possibilities for the elementary school, as such, are already actualities in certain schools. Were it not so, I should not speak of them as possibilities. I do not pretend to be a prophet, in the vulgar sense of the word. The ends which I am about to set before managers and teachers are ends which have been achieved, and are being achieved, *under entirely normal conditions*, in various parts of the country, and which are therefore not impracticable. There are many elementary schools in England in which bold and successful departures have been made from the beaten track; and in each of these cases what is at present a mere possibility for most schools has been actually realised. And there is one elementary school at least in which the beaten track has been entirely abandoned, with the result that possibilities (as I may now call them) which I might perhaps have dismissed on *a priori* grounds as too fantastic for serious consideration, have become part of the everyday life of the scholars.

That school shall now become the theme of my book; for I feel that I cannot serve the cause of education better than by trying to describe and interpret the work that is being done in it. The school belongs to a village which I will call Utopia. It is not an imaginary village—a village of Nowhere—but a very real village, which can be reached, as all other villages can, by rail and road. It nestles at the foot of a long range of hills; and if you will climb the slope that rises at the back of the village, and look over the level country that you have left behind, you will see in the distance the gleaming waters of one of the many seas that wash our shores. The village is fairly large, as villages go in these days of rural depopulation; and the school is attended by about 120 children. The head teacher, whose genius has revolutionised the life, not of the school only, but of the whole village, is a woman. I will call her Egeria. She has certainly been my Egeria, in the sense that whatever modicum of wisdom in matters educational I may happen to possess, I owe in large measure to her. I have paid her school many visits, and it has taken me many months of thought to get to what I believe to be the bed-rock of her philosophy of education,—a philosophy which I will now attempt to expound.

Two things will strike the stranger who pays his first visit to this school. One is the ceaseless activity of the children. The other is the bright and happy look on every face. In too many elementary schools the children are engaged either in laboriously doing nothing,—in listening, for example, with ill-concealed yawns, to *lectures* on

history, geography, nature-study, and the rest; or in doing what is only one degree removed from nothing,—working mechanical sums, transcribing lists of spellings or pieces of composition, drawing diagrams which have no meaning for them, and so forth. But in this school every child is, as a rule, actively employed. And bearing in mind that "unimpeded energy" is a recognised source of happiness, the visitor will probably conjecture that there is a close connection between the activity of the children and the brightness of their faces.

That the latter feature of the school will arrest his attention is almost certain. Utopia belongs to a county which is proverbial for the dullness of its rustics, but there is no sign of dullness on the face of any Utopian child. On the contrary, so radiantly bright are the faces of the children that something akin to sunshine seems always to fill the school. When he gets to know the school, the visitor will realise that the brightness of the children is of two kinds,—the brightness of energy and intelligence, and the brightness of goodness and joy. And when he gets to know the school as well as I do, he will realise that these two kinds of brightness are in their essence one.

Let me say something about each of them.

The Utopian child is alive, alert, active, full of latent energy, ready to act, to do things, to turn his mind to things, to turn his hand to things, to turn his desire to things, to turn his whole being to things. There is no trace in this school of the mental lethargy which, in spite of the ceaseless activity of the teachers, pervades the atmosphere of so many elementary schools; no trace of the fatal

inertness on the part of the child, which is the outcome of five or six years of systematic repression and compulsory inaction. The air of the school is electrical with energy. We are obviously in the presence of an active and vigorous life.

And the activity of the Utopian child is his own activity. It is a fountain which springs up in himself. Unlike the ordinary school-child, he can do things on his own account. He does not wait, in the helplessness of passive obedience, for his teacher to tell him what he is to do and how he is to do it. He does not even wait, in the bewilderment of self-distrust, for his teacher to give him a lead. If a new situation arises, he deals with it with promptitude and decision. His solution of the problem which it involves may be incorrect, but at any rate it will be a solution. He will have faced a difficulty and grappled with it, instead of having waited inertly for something to turn up. His initiative has evidently been developed *pari passu* with his intelligence; and the result of this is that he can think things out for himself, that he can devise ways and means, that he can purpose, that he can plan.

In all these matters the Utopian child differs widely and deeply from the less fortunate child who has to attend a more ordinary type of elementary school. But when we turn to the other aspect of the Utopian brightness, when we consider it as the reflected light of goodness and joy, we find that the difference between the two children is wider and deeper still. There are many schools outside Utopia that pride themselves on the excellence of their discipline; but I am inclined to think that in some

at least of these the self-satisfaction of the teacher is equivalent to a confession of failure. There was a time when every elementary school received a large grant for instruction and a small grant for discipline; and inspectors were supposed to report separately on each of these aspects of the school's life. A strange misconception of the meaning and purpose of education underlay this artificial distinction; but on that we need not dwell. Were an inspector called upon to report on the discipline of the Utopian school, his report would be brief. There is no discipline in the school. There is no need for any. The function of the strict disciplinarian is to shut down, and, if necessary, sit upon, the safety-valve of misconduct. But in Utopia, where all the energies of the children are fully and happily employed, that safety-valve has never to be used. Each child in turn is so happy in his school life that the idea of being naughty never enters his head. One cannot remain long in the school without realising that in its atmosphere

> Love is an unerring light,
> And joy its own security.

It recently happened that on a certain day one of the assistant-teachers had to go to a hospital, that another had to take her there, that the third was ill in bed, and that Egeria—the only available member of the staff—was detained by one of the managers for half-an-hour on her way to school. The school was thus left without a teacher. On entering it, Egeria found all the children in their places and at work. They had looked at the time-table, had chosen some of the older scholars to

take the lower classes, and had settled down happily and in perfect order. This incident proves to demonstration that the *morale* of the school has somehow or other been carried far beyond the limits of what is usually understood by discipline. I have seen historical scenes acted with much vigour by some of the children in the first class, and applauded with equal vigour by their class-mates, while all the time the children in the second class, who were drawing flowers in the same room, never lifted their eyes from their desks. Yet no children can laugh more merrily or more unrestrainedly than these, or make a greater uproar when it is fitting that they should do so.

And if there is no need for punishment, or any other form of repression, in this school, it is equally true that there is no need for rewards. To one who has been taught to regard competition in school as a sacred duty, and the winning of prizes as a laudable object of the scholar's ambition, this may seem strange. But so it is. No child has the slightest desire to outstrip his fellows or rise to the top of his class. Joy in their work, pride in their school, devotion to their teacher, are sufficient incentives to industry. Were the stimulus of competition added to these, neither the zeal nor the interest of the children would be quickened one whit, but a discordant element would be introduced into their school life. Happy as he obviously is in his own school life, it would add nothing to the happiness of the Utopian to feel that he had outstripped his class-mates and won a prize for his achievement. So far, indeed, are these children from wishing to shine at the expense of others, that if they think

Egeria has done less than justice to the work of some one child, the rest of the class will go out of their way to call her attention to it. If some children are brighter, cleverer, and more advanced than others, the reward of their progress is that they are allowed to help on those who lag behind. This is especially noticeable in Drawing, in which the pre-eminence of one or two children has again and again had the effect of lifting the work of the whole class to a higher level. But the laggards are as far from being discouraged by their failure as are the more advanced scholars from being puffed up by their success. From the highest to the lowest, all are doing their best and all are happy together.

From morals to manners the transition is obvious and direct. Be the explanation what it may, the whole atmosphere of this school is evidently fatal to selfishness and self-assertion; and in such an atmosphere good manners will spring up spontaneously among the children, and will scarcely need to be inculcated, for the essence of courtesy is forgetfulness of self and consideration of others in the smaller affairs of social life. The general bearing of the Utopian children hits the happy mean between aggressive familiarity and uncouth shyness, —each a form of self-conscious egoism,—just as their bearing in school hits the happy mean between laxity and undue constraint. They welcome the stranger as a friend, take his goodwill for granted, take him into their confidence, and show him, tactfully and unostentatiously, many pretty courtesies. And they do all this, not because they have been drilled into doing it, but because it is their nature

to do it, because their overflowing sympathy and goodwill must needs express themselves in and through the channels of courtesy and kindness. There is no trace of sullen self-repression in this school. Accustomed (as we shall presently see) to express themselves in various ways, the children cannot entertain kindly feelings without seeking some vent for them. But whether their kindly feelings lead them to dance in a ring round their own inspector, singing "For he's a jolly good fellow," or to escort another visitor, on his departure, through the playground with their arms in his, their tact,—which is the outcome, partly of their self-forgetfulness, partly of the training which their perceptive faculties are always receiving,—is unfailing, and they never allow friendliness to degenerate into undue familiarity.

There is one other feature of the school life which I cannot pass over. I have never been in a school in which the love of what is beautiful in Nature is so strong or so sincere as in this. The æsthetic sense of the Utopian child has not been deliberately trained, but it has been allowed, and even encouraged, to unfold itself; and the appeal that beauty makes to the heart meets in consequence with a ready response. Of the truth of this statement I could, if necessary, give many proofs. One must suffice. The children, who are adepts at drawing with brush and pencil, wander in field and lane with sketch-books in their hands; and one of them at least was so moved by the beauty of a winter sunrise, as seen from his cottage window, that, in his own words, he felt he *must* try to paint it, the result being a water-colour sketch which I have

shown to a competent artist, who tells me that the *feeling* in the sky is quite wonderful.

In this brief preliminary sketch of the more salient features of the Utopian school, I have, I hope, said enough to show that its scholars differ *toto cœlo* from those who attend that familiar type of school which I have recently described. Yet the Utopian children are made of the same clay as the children of other villages. If anything, indeed, the clay is heavier and more stubborn in Utopia than elsewhere. Some ten or twelve years ago, when Egeria took charge of the school, the children were dull, lifeless, listless, resourceless. Now they are bright, intelligent, happy, responsive, overflowing with life, interested in many things, full of ability and resource. How has this change been wrought? Not by veneering or even inoculating the children with good qualities, but simply by allowing their better and higher nature to evolve itself freely, naturally, and under favourable conditions.

That the child's better and higher nature is his real nature, is the assumption—let me rather say, the profound conviction—on which Egeria's whole system of education has been based. In basing it on this assumption, she has made a bold departure from the highway which has been blindly followed for many centuries. We have seen that the basis of education in this country, as in Christendom generally, is the doctrine of original sin. It is taken for granted by those who train the child that his nature, if allowed to develop itself freely, will grow in the wrong direction, and will therefore lead him astray; and that it is the function of education

to counteract this tendency, to do violence to the child's nature, to compel it by main force to grow (or make a pretènce of growing) in the right direction, to subject it to perpetual repression and constraint. The wild whoops to which children so often give vent, when released from school, show that a period of unnatural tension has come to an end; and in these, and in the further conduct of the released child—in the roughness, rudeness, and bad language, of which the passer-by (especially in towns) not infrequently has to complain—we see a rebound from this state of tension, an instinctive protest against the constraint to which he has been subjected for so many hours. The result of all this is that the child leads two lives, a life of unnatural repression and constraint in school, and a life—also unnatural, though it is supposed to be the expression of his nature—of reaction and protest out of school. Such a dislocation of the child's daily life is not likely to conduce to his well-being; while the teacher's assumption that his *rôle* in school is essentially active, and that of the child essentially passive, will lead at last to his turning his back on the root-idea of growth, to his forgetting that the child is a living and therefore a growing organism, to his regarding the child as clay in his hands, to be "remoulded" by him "to his heart's desire," or even as a *tabula rasa*, on which he is to inscribe words and other symbols at his will.

In Utopia the training which the child receives may be said to be based on the doctrine of original goodness. It is taken for granted by Egeria that the child is neither a lump of clay nor a *tabula rasa*, but a "living soul"; that growth is of the

very essence of his being; and that the normal child, if allowed to make natural growth under reasonably favourable conditions, will grow happily and well. It is taken for granted that the potencies of his nature are well worth realising; that the end of his being—the ideal type towards which the natural course of his development tends to take him—is intrinsically good; in fine, that he is *by nature* a "child of God" rather than a "child of wrath." It is therefore taken for granted that growth is in itself a good thing, a move in the right direction; and that to foster growth, to make its conditions as favourable as possible, to give it the food, the guidance, and the stimulus that it needs, is the best thing that education can do for the child.

It is further taken for granted that the many-sided effort to grow which is of the essence of the child's nature is the mainspring of, and expresses itself in, certain typical instincts which no one who studies the child with any degree of care can fail to observe; and that by duly cultivating these instincts,—*expansive* instincts, as one may perhaps call them, since each of them tends to take the child away from his petty self,—the teacher will make the best possible provision for the growth of the child's nature as a whole.

Above all, it is taken for granted that the growth which the child makes must come from within himself; that no living thing can grow vicariously; that the rings of soul-growth, like the rings of tree-growth, must be evolved from an inner life; that the teacher must therefore content himself with giving the child's expansive instincts fair play and free play; and that, for the rest, he must as far as possible

efface himself, bearing in mind that not he, but the child, is the real actor in the drama of school life.

But though so much is left to the child in Utopia, and so much demanded of him, it is not feared that the effort to grow will be repugnant to him. On the contrary, it is taken for granted that in growing, in developing his expansive instincts, the child will be following the lines and obeying the laws of his own nature; that he will be fulfilling the latent desires of his heart; that he will be seeking his own pleasure; in fine, that he will be leading a happy life.

All this is taken for granted in Utopia, and the child's life is therefore one of unimpeded, though duly guided and stimulated, activity. Every instinct that makes for the expansion and elevation (for growth is always upward as well as outward) of the child's nature is given the freest possible play, and the whole organisation of the school is subordinated to this central end.

In order to find out what are the instincts which make for the expansion and elevation of the child's nature, and which education ought therefore to foster, we must do what Egeria has always done, we must observe young children, and study their ways and works. Now every healthy child wants to eat and drink, and to run about. Here are two instincts—the instinctive desire for physical nourishment, and the instinctive desire for physical exercise—through which Nature provides for the growth of the body. How does she provide for the growth of what we have agreed to call the soul? We need not be very careful observers of young children in

order to satisfy ourselves that, apart from physical nourishment and exercise, there are six things which the child instinctively desires, namely:

(1) to talk and listen:
(2) to act (in the dramatic sense of the word):
(3) to draw, paint, and model:
(4) to dance and sing:
(5) to know the why of things:
(6) to construct things.

Let us consider each of these instincts, and try to determine its meaning and purpose.

(1) The child instinctively desires to enter into communion with other persons,—his parents, his brothers and sisters, his nurse, his governess, his little friends. He wants to talk to them, to tell them what he has done, seen, felt, thought; and he wants to hear what they have to tell him,—not only of what they themselves have done, but also of what other persons and other living things have done, in other times, in other countries, in other worlds. Later on, the desire to talk and listen will develop into the desire to write and read; but the desire will still be one for communion, for intercourse with other lives.

We will call this the *communicative instinct.*

(2) The child desires, not only to enter into communion with other persons and other living things, but also, in some sort, to identify his life with theirs. Watch him when he is playing with other children, or even when he is alone, except for the companionship of his dolls and toys. He is pretty sure to be *acting*, playing at make-believe, pretending to be something that he is not, some grown-up person of his acquaintance, some hero of history or

romance, some traveller or other adventurer, some giant, dwarf, or fairy, some animal, wild or tame. He plays the part of one or other of these, and his playmates play other parts, and so a little drama is enacted. If he has no playmates, his dolls have to play their parts, or his toy animals have to be endowed with life, so that they may become fellow-actors with him on the stage that he has selected. No instinct is more inevitable, more sure to energise, than this.

We will call it the *dramatic instinct.*

In both these instincts the child is struggling to grow, to expand his being, by going out of himself, through the medium of sympathy and imagination—twin aspects of the same vital tendency—into the lives of other living beings. We will therefore call these the *Sympathetic Instincts*, and place them in a class by themselves.

(3) From his very babyhood the child delights in colour, and at a very early age he learns to love and understand pictures. Then comes the desire to make these for himself. Give him pencil and paper, give him chalk, charcoal, a paint-box, and other suitable materials, and he will set to work of his own accord to depict what he sees or has seen, either with his outward or his inward eye. Give him a lump of clay, and he will try to mould it into the likeness of something that has either attracted his attention, or presented itself to his imagination. In all these attempts he is trying, unknown to himself, to express his perception of, and delight in, the visible beauty of Nature. This instinct will expand, in the fullness of time, into a strong and subtle feeling for visible beauty, and

into a restless desire to give expression to that feeling.

We will call this the *artistic instinct*, the word *artistic* being used, for lack of a more suitable term, in its narrow and conventional sense.

(4) While the child is still a baby in arms, his mother will sing to him, and dance him on her knee. This is her first attempt to initiate him into the mystery of music; and the response that he makes to her proves that she is a wise teacher, and is appealing to a genuinely natural faculty. It will not be long before he begins to dance and sing for himself. Watch the children in a London court or alley when a barrel-organ appears on the scene. Without having any one to direct or teach them, they will come together and dance in couples, often with abundant grace and charm. Nature is their tutor. Her own rhythm, of which the musician must have caught an echo, is passing through their ears into their hearts and into their limbs. No instinct is so spontaneous as this. A child will whistle or sing while his mind is engaged on other things. If he is happy he will dance about as naturally, and almost as inevitably, as the leaves dance when the breeze passes through them.

We will call this the *musical instinct*. So elemental is it that man shares it, in some degree, with other living things. The birds are accomplished musicians, and their movements, and those of many other creatures, are full of rhythm and grace.

In both these instincts the child is struggling to grow, to expand his being, by going out of himself, in response to the attractive force of beauty, into that larger life which is at the heart of Nature, but

which is not ours until we have made it our own. We will therefore call these the *Æsthetic Instincts*, and place them in a class by themselves.

(5) From a very early age the child desires to know the why and wherefore of things, to understand how effects are produced, to discover new facts, and pass on, if possible, to their causes. In response to the pressure of this instinct, the child breaks his toys in order that he may find out how they work, and asks innumerable questions which make him the terror and despair of his parents and the other "Olympians." No instinct is more insistent in the early days of the child's life. No instinct is more ruthlessly repressed by those to whom the education of the child is entrusted. No instinct dies out so completely (except so far as it is kept alive by purely utilitarian considerations) when education of the conventional type has done its deadly work. It has been said that children go to school ignorant but curious, and leave school ignorant and incurious. This gibe is the plain statement of a patent truth.

We will call this the *inquisitive instinct*.

(6) After analysis comes synthesis. The child pulls his toys to pieces in order that he may, if possible, reconstruct them, and so be the better able to control the working of them. The ends that he sets before himself are those which Comte set before the human race,—"savoir pour prévoir, afin de pouvoir: induire pour déduire, afin de construire." The desire to make things, to build things up, to control ways and means, to master the resources of Nature, to put his knowledge of her laws and facts to a practical use, is strong in

his soul. Give him a box of bricks, and he will spend hours in building and rebuilding houses, churches, towers, and the like. Set him on a sandy shore, with a spade and a pail, and he will spend hours in constructing fortified castles with deep, encircling moats into which the sea may be duly admitted. Or he will make harness and whips of plaited rushes, armour of tea-paper, swords of tin-plate, boxes and other articles of cardboard, waggons, engines, and other implements of wood. We will call this the *constructive instinct.*

In both these instincts the child is struggling to grow, to expand his being, by going out of himself, through the correlated channels of theory and practice, into what I may call the machinery of Nature's life,—an aspect of that life which reveals its mysteries to reason rather than to emotion, or (to use the language of Eastern philosophy) to the faculties that try to find order in the Many, rather than to those which try to hold intercourse with the One.[1] Whichever channel he may use,—and indeed they are not so much two channels as one, for each in turn is for ever leading into and then passing out of the other,—his concern is always for "facts," for the actualities of things, for "objective truth." We will therefore call these the *Scientific Instincts*, and place them in a class by themselves.

There are six instincts, then,—six formative and

[1] The child is struggling to do this, and more than this. The search for order resolves itself into the search for cause; and the search for cause will resolve itself, in the last resort, into the greatest of all adventures,—the search for that pure essence of things on which all the deeper desires of the soul converge, which imagination dreams of as absolute beauty, and reason as a beacon-lamp of all-illuminating light, flashing forth alternately as absolute reality and absolute truth.

expansive instincts—which Nature has implanted in every normal child, and which education, so far as it aims at being loyal to Nature, should take account of and try to foster. Two of these are *sympathetic;* two are *æsthetic;* two are *scientific.* In and through the sympathetic instincts the soul grows in the direction of *love.* In and through the æsthetic instincts the soul grows in the direction of *beauty.* In and through the scientific instincts the soul grows in the direction of *truth.* It is towards this triune goal that Nature herself is ever directing the growth of the growing child. The significance of this conclusion will unfold itself as we proceed.

These instincts manifest themselves in various ways, but chiefly in the direction that they give to that very serious occupation of young children which we call play. It is clear, then, that if these instincts are to be duly cultivated, the work of the school must be modelled, as far as possible, on the lines which children, when at play, spontaneously follow. This Egeria, with her inspired sagacity, has clearly seen; and she has taken her measures accordingly. In Utopia the school life of the child is all play,—play taken very seriously, play systematised, organised, provided with ample materials and ample opportunities, encouraged and stimulated in every possible way. Each of the fundamental instincts that manifest themselves in the child's play, and in doing so give a clear indication of Nature's aims in the child's life, and of the directions in which she wishes him to grow, is duly ministered to in this school, the current that wells up in and through it being skilfully guided

into a suitable channel, and every obstacle to its free development being carefuly removed. But the guidance which Egeria gives tends, as we shall see, to foster rather than fetter the freedom of the child. When the current has been led into a suitable channel, it is expected to shape its own further course, and even to impose on itself the limits—the containing walls—which are needed if its depth and strength are to be maintained.

Let us now consider each of the six instincts in turn, and see what special steps Egeria takes to foster its growth.

(1) *The Communicative Instinct.*

Through this instinct the child goes out of himself into the lives of other persons and other living things. The desire is in its essence one for intercourse, for communion, for the interchange of thoughts, of feelings, of experiences. The normal child is, as we all know, an inveterate chatterbox; but he is also a rapt listener. If he desires, as he certainly does, to tell others about himself, he desires, in no less a degree, to hear about others, either from themselves, or from those who are best able to tell him about them. The balance between the two desires is well maintained by Nature; and it should be carefully maintained by those who train the young, if the communicative instinct as a whole is to make healthy growth.

In too many elementary schools the instinct is systematically starved, the scholars being strictly forbidden to talk among themselves, while their conversational intercourse with their teacher is

limited to receiving a certain amount of dry information, and giving this back, collectively or individually, when they are expressly directed to do so. The child's instinctive desire to converse, being deprived by education of its natural outlets, must needs force for itself the subterranean and illicit outlet of whispering in class, either under the teacher's nose, if he happens to be unobservant or indolent, or behind his back, if he happens to be vigilant and strict. And as the child is forbidden to talk about things which are wholesome and interesting, it is but natural that in his surreptitious conversations he should talk about things which are less edifying, things which are trivial and vulgar, or even unwholesome and unclean. Children are naturally obedient and truthful; but in their attempts to find outlets for healthy activities which are wantonly repressed, they will go far down the inclined plane of disobedience and deceit.

In Utopia free conversation is systematically encouraged. No elementary school is supposed to open before 9 a.m.; but Egeria is in the habit of coming to school at 8.45 or earlier, so that the children who wish to do so may come and talk to her freely about the things that interest them,—what they have observed on their walks to or from school, what they have heard or read at home, what they think about things in general, and so on. The school has a good library of books which are worth reading, both in prose and verse. These the children read in school and out of school, and are thus brought into communication with other minds, with other times, with other lands. They are also accustomed to talk freely to one another about the books

that they are reading. Whatever lesson may be going on, they are encouraged to ask questions about the matter in hand, and even to express their own views about it. They go out into the playground in groups and make up games and plays, discussing things freely among themselves. When they are preparing to act an historical scene or a passage from some dramatic author, they hold a sort of informal parliament, in which the actors are selected and various important questions are provisionally settled. They write letters in school to real people. The older girls take the little ones in hand, and talk to them and draw them out. When an interesting phenomenon is noticed, *e. g.* in a Nature ramble, the children are accustomed to discuss it in groups, and to try to think out among themselves its cause and its meaning. Gossip is of course discouraged; but it is scarcely necessary for Egeria to proscribe it; for idle talk has no attraction for children who are allowed to talk freely and frankly, at all times and in all places, about things that are really worth discussing. Life is full of interest for children who are allowed, as these are, to take an active interest in it; and subjects of conversation are therefore ever presenting themselves, in school and out of school, to the happy children of Utopia. This means that the life of each individual child is overflowing through many channels, an overflow which will carry the out-welling life into the lives of other living beings—human and infra-human, actual and imaginary—and even beyond these, when it has been met and reinforced by other surging currents, into the impersonal life of Humanity and of Nature.

(2) *The Dramatic Instinct.*

Whatever else young children may be, they are all born actors; and in a school which bases its scheme of education on the actualities of child life, it is but natural that the dramatic instinct should be fostered in every possible way. "Work while you work, and play while you play," is one of those trite maxims which have been unintelligently repeated till they have lost whatever value they may once have possessed. "Work while you play, and play while you work," seems to be Egeria's substitute for it; and she would, I think, do well to write those words over the porch of her school.

In the ordinary elementary school a fair amount of acting goes on in the infant department, and an occasional attempt is made, in one of the higher classes of the upper department, to act a scene from Shakespeare or an episode in English history. But during the five years or so of school life which intervene between the infant department and "Standard VI," the dramatic instinct is as a rule entirely neglected; and the consequent outgrowth of self-consciousness in the children is too often a fatal obstacle to the success of the spasmodic attempts at dramatisation which are made in the higher classes.

In Utopia "acting" is a vital part of the school life of every class, and every subject that admits of dramatic treatment is systematically dramatised. In History, for example, when the course of their study brings them to a suitable episode, the children set to work to dramatise it. With this end in view,

they consult some advanced text-book or historical novel or other book of reference, and having studied with care the particular chapter in which they are interested, and having decided among themselves who are to play what parts, they proceed to make up their own dialogues, and their own costumes and other accessories. They then act the scene, putting their own interpretation on the various parts, and receiving the stimulus and guidance of Egeria's sympathetic and mœutic criticism. Their class-mates and the rest of the children in the main room look on, with their history books open in front of them, and applaud; and, by gradually familiarising themselves with the various parts, qualify themselves half-unconsciously to act as under-studies in the particular scene, and in due course to play their own parts as interpreters of some other historical episode. I know of no treatment of history which is so effective as this for young children. The actual knowledge of the facts of history which a child carries away with him from an elementary school cannot well be large, and is, in many cases, a negligible quantity. But the child who has once acted history will always be interested in it, and being interested in it will be able, without making a formal study of it, to absorb its spirit, its atmosphere, and the more significant of its facts. Nor do the advantages of the dramatic treatment of history end with the subject itself. The actors in these historical scenes are, as I have said, expressing their own interpretation of the various parts, and their own perception of the meaning of each episode as a whole. This means that they are training their imaginative sympathy,—a

sovereign faculty which of all faculties is perhaps the most emancipative and expansive,—and training it, as I can testify, with striking success; for the dramatic power which they display is remarkable, and can have been generated by nothing less than sympathetic insight into the feelings of the various historical personages and the possibilities of the various situations.

It is probable that History lends itself more readily to dramatic treatment than any other subject, but it is by no means the only subject that is dramatised in Utopia. An interest in Geography is awakened by scenes in foreign lands and episodes from books of travel being acted by the children. An interest in Arithmetic, by a shop being opened, which is well equipped with weights, measures, and cardboard money, and in which a salesman stands behind the counter and sells goods to a succession of customers. An interest in Literature by the acting, with improvised costumes, of passages from Shakespeare's plays, or scenes from Scott's and Dickens' novels. Simple plays to illustrate Nature-study are acted by the younger children; while the Folk Songs, which, as we shall see, play a prominent part in the musical life of the children, are acted as well as sung.

However rude and simple the histrionic efforts of the children may be, they are doing two things for the actors. They are giving them a living interest in the various subjects that are dramatised; and, by teaching them to identify themselves, if only for a moment, with other human beings, they are leading them into the path of tolerance, of compassion, of charity, of sympathy,—the ever-widen-

ing path which makes at last for Nirvânic oneness with the One Life.[1]

(3) *The Artistic Instinct.*

The desire to reproduce with pencil, paint, or clay the form and colour of the outward world will, if duly cultivated, gradually transform itself into the desire to feel, to understand, to interpret, to express, not the form and colour only of the outward world, but also that less palpable but more spiritual quality which we call beauty. But in order that this transformation may take place, the child must always endeavour to reproduce with due fidelity the more palpable qualities of colour and form. In this endeavour he must bring many faculties into play. He must observe closely and attentively. He must reflect on what he observes. He must reflect on what he himself is doing. He must compare his work with the original, and try to discover how far he has succeeded, and where he has gone astray. The more faithfully he tries to reproduce what he has seen, the clearer and surer will be his insight into the less palpable properties of things,—into those details, those aspects, those qualities, which do not reveal themselves to the first careless glance, but which will

[1] I shall perhaps be told that my extravagant idealism is out of place in a book on elementary education. To this possible reproach I can but answer, in Mrs. Browning's words, that—

> It takes the ideal to blow a hair's breadth off
> The dust of the actual.

My experience of Utopia has convinced me that in taking thought for the education of the young it is impossible to be too idealistic, and that the more "commonsensical" and "utilitarian" one's philosophy of education, the shallower and falser it will prove to be.

gradually reveal themselves to those who will take the trouble to discover them. When he is asked to reproduce things which are intrinsically beautiful—flowers, branches, buds, shells, butterflies, and the like—he begins to realise that if his work is to be successful, he must do justice to many impalpable, though not imperceptible, details which go to the making up of beauty. So the sense of beauty, the feeling for it, the desire to bring it into his work, grows up in his heart; and a new kind of fidelity —fidelity to *feeling* rather than to *fact* (if I may speak for the moment in the delusive language of dualism)—begins to weave itself into his artistic consciousness.

If there is any school in England, in which fidelity to feeling has evolved itself out of fidelity to fact, that school is in the village of Utopia. Some ten or twelve years ago a decree went out from Whitehall that Drawing was to be taught in all the elementary schools in England. Egeria at once took the children into her confidence, and said to them: "You have now got to learn to draw: you don't know how to draw, and I don't know how to draw, but we must all set to work and see what we can do." A few years later the school was visited by the inspector to whose zeal as a prophet, and skill as an expositor and teacher, the transformation in the teaching of drawing which is gradually taking effect in all parts of the country, has been largely due. Here is the report[1] that he wrote after his visit—

"In this school the teaching of Drawing reaches

[1] An informal report to me, not a formal report to the Board of Education.

the highest educational level I have hitherto met with in our elementary schools, and the results are the genuine expression of the children's own thoughts. Flat copies are not used, and the scholars evolve their own technique, for the Head Teacher is not strong herself in this respect. The development of thought carries with it the development of skill, and this is clearly seen in the children's drawings, which show good form and proportion, some knowledge of light and shade, a delicate and refined perception of colour, and a wonderful power of dealing with the difficulties of foreshortening. The central law is self-effort,—confidence and self-reliance follow. The spontaneous activities of the children are duly recognised, and the latter decide what to draw, how to draw it, and the materials to be used. One cannot remain long in the school without observing the absence of that timidity, that haunting fear of making a mistake, which paralyses the minds and bodies of so many of our children. Under the influence of the Head Teacher the children become acute critics. Her methods coincide so exactly with those which I have long been advocating, that I give them in her own words—

"'I gave each child an ivy-leaf and said, "Now look well at it." We talked about its peculiarities, looking at it all the time, and then I told them to draw one, still looking back to the leaf from time to time. Then I examined their drawings. A good many were, of course, faulty. In those cases I did not say, "No, you are wrong; this is the way," and go to the blackboard. I said, "In such and such a part is yours the same as the leaf? What is

different? How can you alter it?" etc., etc. I make *them tell me* their faults. There was no blackboard demonstration.'

"From a careful examination of their work it is clear that the children have not only been taught to draw, but that they love and enjoy their drawing. Form and colour are not only seen, but understood and felt. The children are impelled by an irresistible desire to reach and express the truth, and are thus carried along an ever-moving path of educative action."

I have already spoken of the love of visible beauty which is a characteristic feature of the life of this school. It is in the drawing lesson that this love of beauty has in the main evolved itself. Other influences have no doubt been at work. Nature-study and literature, for example, have, as taught in this school, done much to foster the children's latent love of beauty; but had drawing never been taught, the influence of those subjects would have been much less effective than it has been. It is in the struggle to express what he perceives that the Utopian child has gradually strengthened and deepened his perceptive powers, till his sight has transformed itself into insight, and form and colour have come to be interpreted by him through the medium of the beauty which is behind them,—his feeling of beauty having, little by little, been awakened and evolved by his unceasing efforts to interpret the *vraie vérité* of form and colour, which, as he now begins to learn, are beauty's outward self.

(4) *The Musical Instinct*

In the development of the artistic sense the path of imitation is followed until it leads at last to heights which it cannot scale. The development of the musical sense takes from the first a widely different path. Nature has a beautiful music of her own, but the child seldom attempts to imitate this. Music belongs to the soul even more than to the outward world. So at least one feels disposed to think. But perhaps it is more correct to say that in the presence of music the provisional distinction between inward and outward, between the soul and the surrounding world, becomes wholly effaced. Expression is always the counterpart of perception; and we may rest assured that the deep, subtle, and elusive feelings to which music gives utterance have reality for their counterpart. The musician does not often reproduce in his compositions the audible sounds of the outward world,—the voices of animals, the songs of birds, the rustle of leaves, the murmur of the sea, the sighing of the breeze, the thunder of the storm. What he does reproduce is the music that awakes in his soul when the emotions which these sounds kindle begin to struggle for expression,—the music that is behind all the audible sounds, and perhaps also behind all the inaudible vibrations of Nature,—the music that is in his heart because it is also at the heart of Nature,—*the rhythm of the Universe*, as one may perhaps call it for lack of a fitter phrase. It is the sense of this rhythm which inspires the great Composer when he builds up his masterpieces. It is the

sense of this rhythm which inspires the child when, in the joy of his heart, he breaks spontaneously into dance and song. To bring the rhythm of the Universe into the daily life of the child, to give free play to his instinctive sense of its all-pervading presence, is one of the highest functions of the teacher. And the more carefully the sense of rhythm is cultivated, the more does it tend to spiritualise itself, and the more profound and more vital is the life which it struggles to interpret and evolve. There is no instinct which is so deeply seated as the musical. It is possible for a child, it is possible for a whole class of children, to sing out of the depths of the soul; and when this happens we may be sure that a fountain of spiritual joy has been unsealed, and that a great and sacred mystery has been unveiled. There is a school in one of the poorest slums of a large town, in which, some two or three years ago, the children were taught to sing, and the teachers to teach singing, by an inspired "master" who believes that to lift the sluices of spiritual feeling is to quicken into ever-increasing activity its hidden springs; and neither the teachers nor the children have yet forgotten their lesson. The children are poor, pale, thin, unkempt, ill-clad, unlovely; but I am told that when they sing their faces are transfigured, and they all become beautiful.

Egeria is an accomplished musician, and though Utopia belongs to one of the unmusical counties of England, she has found it easy to awaken the musical instinct in the hearts of its children. A few years ago she introduced the old English Folk Songs and Morris Dances into the school. The

children took to them at once as ducklings take to the water; and within a year they were able to give an admirably successful performance of some two dozen songs and dances in the village hall. Some of these had been rehearsed only once; but the children, thanks to their having been systematically trained to educate themselves, are so versatile and resourceful that every item on their programme was a complete success. The Folk Songs and Morris Dances are still the delight of the children. They are ever adding to their repertory of songs; and when they go into the playground for recreation, they at once form into small groups for Morris Dancing, the older children taking the little ones in hand, and initiating them into the pleasures of rhythmical movement.

There is another way in which Egeria brings music into the lives of the children. In her own words, she "sets many of their lessons to music." For example, when they are doing needlework or drawing or any other quiet lesson, she plays high-class music to them, which forms a background to their efforts and their thoughts, and which gradually weaves itself, on the one hand into the outward and visible work that they are doing, and on the other hand into the mysterious tissue of their inward life.

(5) *The Inquisitive Instinct.*

As the inquisitive instinct makes the child an intolerable nuisance to his ignorant and indolent elders, it is but natural that in the unenlightened school, as in the unenlightened home, it should be

forcibly exterminated. It is through the agency of the formula "Don't speak till you are spoken to," that its destruction is usually effected. But under Egeria's ægis conversation in school hours is, as we have seen, freely encouraged, and the child's right to ask questions fully recognised; and one may therefore conjecture that this proscribed and outlawed instinct will find a safe asylum in her school. Whatever lesson may be in progress, the Utopian children are allowed, and even expected, to seek for illumination whenever they find themselves in the dark, to pause inquiringly at every obstacle to their understanding what they have seen or heard or read.

The encouragement which is given in Utopia to the child who seeks to gratify his desire for knowledge, is positive as well as negative. When the obstacles which education usually places in his path have been removed, it is found that the whole atmosphere of the school is favourable to the growth of his inquisitive instinct. At every turn he is called upon to plan and contrive, and is thus made to realise his own limitations, and to try to escape from them. Whatever he may have in hand,—be it the preparation for acting a new scene, or the interpretation of a new Folk Song or Morris Dance, or the invention of a new school game, or the thinking out some new way of treating a "subject,"—he is sure to find that knowledge is needed if he is to achieve success; and his desire for knowledge is therefore continually stimulated by the demands that his own initiative and activity are ever making upon him.

But it is in the "Nature lesson" that the inquisi-

tive instinct finds in Utopia its freest scope and its fullest opportunity. To one who had persuaded himself of the innate stupidity of the average English child, a Nature lesson in Utopia would come as a revelation. He would learn for the first time that, far from being innately stupid, the average English child has it in him to reach a very high level of keenness, acuteness, and intellectual activity. Whenever a lesson is given on a natural object, *e. g.* a flower or a leaf, every child has a specimen and a lens. The object is then closely and carefully observed, in the hope of discovering features in it which might escape the unobservant. Whenever such features are discovered the children try to account for them. In these attempts they display much ingenuity and intelligence, and are led on by Egeria in the direction of the true explanation of each phenomenon, and the relation of this to what they know of the object as a whole, and of its meaning and function. The eagerness of the children to volunteer explanations of the facts that they observe is only equalled by the intelligence with which they grasp the general bearing of the problems that confront them, and the resourcefulness and quickness of wit with which they make repeated attempts to solve them.

And these are not the only qualities to which the Nature lesson gives free play. It is interesting to note that as on the one hand the inquisitive instinct is obviously near of kin to the communicative, so on the other hand it is ever tending to link itself to the artistic. The closeness of observation which is the basis of success in Nature-study, and by means of which the inquisitive instinct is fed

and strengthened, is also the basis of success in drawing; and in each case it leads beyond itself into a region in which it has to be supplemented by, and even transfigured into, imagination, the faculty by means of which we observe what is at once impalpable and real.[1] And in that region the distinction between truth and beauty is ever tending to efface itself. The master sculptor is always an accomplished anatomist; and the genuine naturalist is a lover and admirer, as well as a student, of Nature. It has been well said that "to see things in their beauty is to see them in their truth"; and it is perhaps equally, though more remotely, true that to see things in their truth is to see them in their beauty. That being so, we need not wonder that among the Utopian children the love of what is beautiful in Nature has grown continuously with the growth of their interest in Nature-study, and that the inquisitive instinct is ever reinforcing and being reinforced by the artistic.

(6) *The Constructive Instinct.*

Active, intelligent, resourceful, self-helpful, the Utopian child takes to handwork of various kinds as readily and almost as spontaneously as the birds in spring-time take to the work of nest-building. It must indeed be admitted that the systematic instruction in Gardening, Cookery, and Woodwork which warrants the payment of special grants for these "subjects" is not given. But informal

[1] Real, in the sense that the beauty of form and colour is more real than either form or colour, and that a law of Nature is more real than an isolated fact.

gardening, informal cookery, and informal woodwork are vital features of the school life. Nor are the children's essays in handwork limited to these subjects. Whatever implement, instrument, or other contrivance may be needed in order to illustrate or otherwise help forward the general work of the school will be made by the children, so far as their technical ability and the resources of the school permit. For example, they will make fences, seats, frames, and sheds for their gardens, and "properties" and dresses for their dramatic performances. They will illustrate their games and lessons by means of simple modelling and paper-cutting. The older girls will dress dolls for the little ones to their own fancy, using their own discretion as regards material, style of dress, and method of dress-making. And so on.

But ready as the Utopian children are to use their hands, and clever as they are at using them, it is not through manual activity only that the development of their constructive instinct is carried on. One of the characteristic features of the school is the largeness of the scale on which the constructive powers of the children are encouraged to energise, and the frequency and variety of the demands that are made upon them. The Utopian child is expected to educate himself, not merely in the sense of doing by and for himself whatever task may be set him, but also in the sense of devising new tasks for himself, in thinking out new ways of treating the different subjects that appear on the school time-table, in taking thought for the whole scheme of his education. As the years go by, Egeria makes more and greater demands on the initiative and the

intelligence of the children, her aim being apparently to transform the school by slow degrees into a self-governing community which, under her presidency, shall order its own life and work out its own salvation. This means, as I have lately pointed out, that at every turn the Utopian child is being called upon to plan and contrive; and this, again, means that his constructive instinct, with his inquisitive instinct as its other self, is being continually exercised on the widest possible field and under the most stimulating of all influences. The result of this is that reciprocal action is ever going on in his mind between the faculties that acquire knowledge and the faculties that apply it,—action which makes for the rapid and healthy growth of both sets of faculties, and which is therefore ever tending to strengthen the child's capacity for thinking and to raise the plane of its activity.

What is the culture of the child's expansive instincts likely to do for him?

I will weave into my answer to this question my knowledge of what has been done and is being done in Utopia.

It is through the medium of his own exertions that the evolution of the child's instincts is carried on by Egeria. It may be possible to lay veneers of information on the surface of a child's mind, but it is not possible to lay on veneers of growth; and growth, not information, is the end at which Egeria has always aimed. If a child is to grow, he must exercise his own limbs, his own organs, his own faculties. No one else can do this for him; and unless he does it himself, it will never be done.

The school life in Utopia is therefore one of constant activity. The habit of doing things, of doing things for himself, of doing things by himself, is gradually built up in each child. There is no forced inertness in Utopia, no slackness, no boredom, no yawning. And the activity which is characteristic of the school is always the child's own activity. The child himself is behind everything that he does. The child himself is expressing himself in his every action. Mechanical activity, the doing of things, not merely at the bidding of another, but also under his minutely detailed direction, is as foreign to the genius of the school as is the passivity of the helpless victims of the unenlightened teacher's "chalk and talk."

The first consequence, then, of the training of the expansive instincts which is given in Utopia is the building up in each scholar of what I may call the habit of rational activity. In many schools the energies of the child are systematically dammed back, till at last the springs of his activity, finding that no demand is made upon them, cease to flow. In Utopia the sluices, though always regulated, are permanently lifted, and the energies of the child are ever moving, with a strong and steady current, in whatever channel they may have chanced to enter. So strong, indeed, and so steady is the current that it maintains its movement long after the child has left school. The employers of labour in the neighbourhood of Utopia will tell you that there are no slackers or loafers in the yearly output of the school. Egeria recently received a visit from one of her ex-pupils, a girl of fourteen who is at home keeping house for her father, and who said

to her in the course of their conversation: "I do just love washing days; I get up before six and start. Then, when all the washing is done, I scrub everything bright in the copper while I have the hot soapsuds." Accustomed as he (or she) is from his (or her) earliest days to sincere and fearless self-expression, the Utopian child is entirely incapable of indulging in cant; and the genuineness of the sentiment which dictated those words is therefore above suspicion. To work vigorously, to do well whatever he (or she) has to do, is a real pleasure to the Utopian child. Indeed his whole being is a living response to the familiar precept: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might."

And what he does with his might is always well worth doing. His constant effort to express himself has, as its necessary counterpart, a constant effort to find out what is worth expressing, to get to the truth of things, to see things as they are. The consequent growth of his perceptive powers may be looked at from two points of view. On the one hand his growing capacity for getting on terms with things—for feeling his way among them, for "getting the hang" of them, for making himself at home with them, for learning their ins and outs, for understanding their ways and works—will give him the power of putting forth an appropriate *sense* in response to the demands of each new environment, and, through the medium of this sense, of converting information into knowledge. For this reason new "subjects" have no terror for Egeria and her pupils. Though she has never thought in subjects, she is ready to extend her curriculum in

any direction in which she thinks that her children are likely to find interest or profit. The versatility, the mental agility, of the children is as remarkable as their activity. The current of their energy is ready to adapt itself to every modifying influence, to every change of geological formation, that it may encounter in its course, and to shape its channel or channels accordingly.

On the other hand, as healthy vigorous growth is always upward (and downward) as well as outward, the lateral extension of the child's perceptive powers must needs be balanced in Utopia by the gradual elevation of his standpoint, with a corresponding widening of his outlook, and the proportionate deepening of his insight. When the school life of the child is one of continuous self-expression, opportunities for "putting his soul" into what he says and does will often present themselves to him; and if only a few of these are made use of, his outlook on life will widen, and his imaginative sympathy with life will deepen, to an extent which to one who had never visited Utopia might well seem incredible. I have spoken of the Utopian child's love of the beautiful. This is one aspect of the spiritual growth that he is always making. Other aspects of it are his strong sympathy with life in all its forms, and a certain large and free way of looking at things, which, as far as my experience of school children goes, is all his own.

There is yet another aspect of his spiritual growth which is perhaps the most vital and the most typical of all. When we say that the child is growing both laterally and vertically (like a shapely tree), we mean that he is growing as a whole, as a living

soul. Now the growth of the soul as such must needs take the form of outgrowth, of escape from "self." Growth is, in its essence, an emancipative process; and though it sometimes intensifies selfishness and widens the sphere of its activity, that is invariably due to its being one-sided and therefore inharmonious and unhealthy. When the child or the man is growing as a living whole, with a happy, harmonious, many-sided growth, his growth is of necessity *out*growth, and he must needs be escaping from the thraldom of his lower and lesser self. This conclusion is no mere inference from accepted or postulated premises. What I have seen in Utopia has forced it upon me. The unselfishness, the natural, easy, spontaneous self-forgetfulness, of the Utopian child, is the central feature of his moral life,—so marked and withal so unique a feature that its presence proves to demonstration, first, that growth of the right sort is necessarily emancipative, and, next, that the growth made in Utopia is growth of the right sort. I have already commented on the singular charm of manner which distinguishes the children of Utopia. Their self-forgetfulness, their entire lack of self-consciousness, is one source of this charm. The tactfulness which their life of self-expression, and therefore of trained perception, tends to engender, is another. But the moral aspect of Utopianism is one of such surpassing interest, and also of such profound significance from the point of view of my fundamental "truism," that I must limit myself for the moment to this passing reference to it, and reserve it for fuller treatment in the remaining chapters.

I could easily make a long list of Utopian virtues

and graces, but I must content myself with touching on one more typical product of Egeria's philosophy of education,—the joy which the children wear in their faces and bear in their hearts. The sense of well-being which must needs accompany healthy and harmonious growth is realised by him who experiences it as joy. The Utopian children are by many degrees the happiest that I have met with in an elementary school, and I must therefore conclude that all is well with them, that their well-being—the true end of all education—has been, and is being, achieved. If you look at any of them with more than a mere passing glance, you will be sure to win from him the quick response of a sunny smile,—a smile which is half gladness, half goodwill. And the joy of their hearts goes with them when their schooldays are over and they begin to work for their bread. Last year one of the boys, on leaving school, found employment in a large field on the lower slopes of the hills, where he had to collect flints and pile them in heaps, his wage for this dull and tiresome work being no more than fivepence a day. But he found the work neither dull nor tiresome; for as he marched up and down the field, collecting and piling the flints with cheery goodwill, he sang his Folk Songs with all the spontaneous happiness of a soaring lark.

Activity, versatility, imaginative sympathy, a wide and free outlook, self-forgetfulness, charm of manner, joy of heart,—these are qualities which might be expected to unfold themselves under the influence of the Utopian training, and which do, in point of fact, flourish vigorously in the soil and atmosphere of Utopia. They are the outcome of a

type of education which differs radically from that which has hitherto been accepted as orthodox,—differing from it with the unfathomable difference between vital and mechanical obedience, between life and machinery.

CHAPTER V

EDUCATION THROUGH SELF-REALISATION

ACTIVITY, versatility, imaginative sympathy, a large and free outlook, self-forgetfulness, charm of manner, joy of heart,—are there many schools in England in which the soil and atmosphere are favourable to the vigorous growth of all these qualities? I doubt it. In the secondary schools, of all grades and types, the education given is so one-sided, thanks to the inexorable pressure of the scholarship system, that the harmonious development of the child's nature is not to be looked for. In the elementary schools, from which the chilling shadow cast by thirty years of "payment by results" is passing slowly—very slowly—away, the instinct of the teacher is to distrust the child and do everything, or nearly everything, for him, the result being that the whole *régime* is still unfavourable to the spontaneous outgrowth of the child's higher qualities. There are of course schools, both secondary and elementary, in which one or more of the Utopian qualities flourish with considerable vigour. There are elementary schools, for example, in which the children, being allowed by enterprising teachers to walk in new paths without leading strings, have become unexpectedly active and versatile. And there are others—mostly in the

slum regions of great towns—in which the devotion, the sympathetic kindness, and the gracious bearing of the teachers have won from the children the response of unselfish affection, attractive manners, and happy faces.[1] Yet even in these exceptional cases it may be doubted if the development of the particular quality or qualities for which the school is distinguished reaches the high-water mark which is reached in each and all of the seven qualities in Utopia. As for the elementary schools which remain faithful, as so many still do, to the traditions of the old *régime*,—if in these any of the seven qualities manage to resist the adverse influences to which they are all exposed, they have at best but a starved and stunted life.

I have spoken much and with unsparing frankness of the shortcomings of our elementary schools. The time has come for me to say with emphasis that however grave and however numerous may be the defects of elementary education in England, they are defects which it shares with all other branches of education, and which England shares with all other Western lands. The plain truth is that education as such is a failure in the West, a failure in the sense that the very qualities which it ought to foster—the cardinal virtues, mental, moral, and spiritual, which are present in embryo in every child, waiting to be realised—are not merely neglected by it, in its insane ardour for "results," but

[1] I am thinking more particularly of some of the Roman Catholic schools in the Irish quarter of Liverpool, where the singularly kind and gracious bearing of the teaching "sisters" towards their poor, ill-fed, and ill-clad pupils is an educative influence of incalculable value.

are also exposed, in most of its schools, to strongly adverse influences. And the reason why education as such is a failure in the West is that from its earliest days it has been a house divided against itself, those who were and are responsible for it having been under the influence of two mutually destructive assumptions, which they have vainly tried to reconcile with one another.

The first of these assumptions is my initial "truism,"—that the function of education is to foster growth. This is admitted, implicitly if not directly, by all who think and speak about education, and even, in their unguarded moments, by most of those who teach. It is generally admitted, for example, that such mental qualities as attention, memory, judgment, intelligence, reason, such moral qualities as loyalty, courage, truthfulness, kindness, unselfishness, such semi-moral qualities as cleanliness, orderliness, carefulness, alertness, industry, punctuality, are capable of being developed by education. It is further admitted that such special qualities as literary or artistic taste, the mathematical or the historical sense, an aptitude for business or finance, are ready to evolve themselves, in response to the fostering influence of practical experience directed by skilful teaching. It is admitted, in other words, that there is much in human nature, apart from what is purely or mainly physical, which is both capable and worthy of cultivation, and which education ought therefore to try to cultivate.

So far, so good. These admissions, with the fundamental admission which underlies them all, might form the basis of a sound philosophy of

education, if they were not liable to be stultified and even nullified by the counter assumption that human nature is innately evil and corrupt. For from the latter assumption has followed, both logically and naturally, a theory of education which is not merely unfavourable but fatal to growth. If human nature is innately evil, if it has no inborn capacity for goodness or truth, what is there in it that is worth training? So far as the "great matters" of life are concerned, the child must be educated by being told in minute detail what to do, and by being alternately bribed and bullied into doing it. As he can neither think, nor believe, nor desire, nor do what is right, he must be told what to think, what to believe, what to desire, what to do; and as it is assumed that the tasks set him by his teacher will not be intrinsically attractive, he must be induced to perform them by the threat of external punishments and the promise of external rewards. In other words, in the spheres of religion and morals, so far as these can be walled off from the rest of human life, he must be educated, not by being helped to grow, but by being compelled to obey; and as the spheres of religion and morals cannot possibly be walled off from the rest of human life, the idea of educating the child through the medium of passive and mechanical obedience will gradually extend its influence over all the other departments and aspects of his home and school life, his innate sinfulness finding its equivalent, in secular matters, in his innate helplessness and stupidity, while in the place of the creeds, codes, and catechisms by which his spiritual welfare is provided for, he will be fed during the hours of

secular instruction on rations of information, formulated rules, and minute directions of various kinds. Under this *régime* of wire-pulling on the part of the teacher and puppet-like dancing on the part of the child, the growth of the child's faculties,—of the whole range of his faculties, for they will all come under the blighting influence of the current misconception of the bent of his nature and the consequent under-estimate of his powers,—far from being fostered, will be systematically thwarted and starved. This is the fate which might be expected to befall the child if the doctrine of his innate sinfulness were allowed to dominate his education; and this is the fate which has befallen and is befalling him in all grades of society and in all the countries of the West.

It is the doctrine of original sin, of the congenital depravity of man's nature, which blocks the way to the reform of education,—blocks the way to it by compelling education to become the destroying angel instead of the foster-nurse of the child's expanding life. In criticising the defects of our educational system, we have too long mistaken symptoms for causes, and believed that we were removing the latter when we were only palliating or at best excising the former. To pinch off a withered bud, to lop off a withered limb, of the diseased tree of education, to train in this or that direction a branch which is as yet unaffected, is but lost labour so long as the tree is being slowly poisoned at its roots by a fundamental misconception of the character and capacity of the child. It is time that we should reconsider our whole attitude towards human nature. The widespread

belief that sundry faculties, physical, mental, and moral, admit of being cultivated and ought to be cultivated in the schoolroom—a belief which is ever affirming itself against the educational systems and practices that are ever giving it the lie—may surely be construed into an admission that my primary truism is at least a truth. If this is so, if the business of the teacher is, as I contend, to help the child to grow, healthily, vigorously, and symmetrically, on all the planes of his being, the inference is irresistible that education will achieve nothing but failure until its foundations have been entirely relaid. For faith in the inherent soundness, in the natural goodness, of the seed or sapling, or whatever else he may undertake to rear, is the first condition of success on the part of the grower. And to ask education to bring to sane and healthy maturity the plant which we call human nature, and in the same breath to tell it that human nature is intrinsically corrupt and evil, is to set it an obviously impracticable task. One might as well supply a farmer with the seeds of wild grasses and poisonous weeds, and ask him to grow a crop of wheat. Growth can and does transform potential into actual good, but no process of growth can transform what is innately evil into what is finally good. A poisonous seed will ripen of inner necessity into a poisonous plant; and the more carefully it is fed and tended, the larger and stronger will the poisonous plant become.

The time has come, then, for us to throw to the winds the time-honoured, but otherwise dishonoured and discredited, belief that the child is conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity, and that

therefore his nature, if allowed to obey its own laws and follow its own tendencies, will ripen into death, instead of into a larger and richer life. I shall perhaps be told that if this belief is abandoned, other religious beliefs will go with it. Let them go. They have kept bad company, and if they cannot dissociate themselves from it, they had better share its fate. What is real and vital in our religious beliefs will gain incalculably by being disengaged from what may once have had a life and a meaning of its own but is now nothing better than a morbid growth. To tell a man that, apart from a miracle, he is predestined to perdition, is the surest way to send him there; and it is probable that the doctrine of his own innate depravity is the deadliest instrument for achieving his ruin, that Man, in his groping endeavours to explain to himself the dominant facts of his existence, has ever devised.

Nor is the practical failure of the doctrine—its failure to achieve any lasting result but the strangulation of Man's expanding life—the only proof that it is inherently unsound. There is positive proof that the counter doctrine, the doctrine of Man's potential goodness, is inherently true. We have seen that the great arterial instincts which manifest themselves in the undirected play of young children, are making for three supreme ends,—the sympathetic instincts for the goal of *Love*, the artistic instincts for the goal of *Beauty*, the scientific instincts for the goal of *Truth*. We have seen, in other words, that the push of Nature's forces in the inner life of the young child is ever tending to take him out of himself in the direction of a triune

goal which I may surely be allowed to call *Divine*. If we follow towards "infinity" the lines of love, of beauty, and of truth, we shall begin at last to dream of an ideal point—the meeting-point of all and the vanishing-point of each—for which no name will suffice less pregnant with meaning or less suggestive of reality than that of God. It is towards God, then, not towards the Devil, that the ripening, expansive forces of Nature which are at work in the child, are directing the process of his growth. We are taught that Man is by nature a "child of wrath." The more closely we study his ways and works when, as a young child, he is left (more or less) to his own devices, the stronger does our conviction become that he is by nature a "child of God." Those who are in a position to speak tell us that the normal child is born physically healthy. If the men of science would study the other sides of his being as carefully as they have studied his physique, they would, I feel sure, be able to tell us that he is also born mentally, morally, and spiritually healthy, and that on these sides, as well as on the physical side, his growth might be and ought to be a natural movement towards perfection.

For some of my readers such arguments as these are perhaps too much in the air to be convincing. Well, then, let us appeal to experience. Let us see what the systematic cultivation of his natural faculties has done for the child in Utopia. I have already pointed out that the unselfishness of the children—the complete absence of self-seeking and self-assertion—is one of the most noticeable features of the life of their school. Now there is no place for moral teaching on the time-table of the school;

and I can say without hesitation that the direct inculcation of morality is wholly foreign to Egeria's conception of education. How, then, has the emancipation of the child from the first enemy of Man's well-being—from all those narrowing, hardening, and demoralising influences which we speak of collectively as egoistic or selfish—been effected in Utopia? By no other means than that of allowing the child's nature to unfold itself, on many sides of its being and under thoroughly favourable conditions. The twofold desire which we all experience,—to accept and rest in the ordinary undeveloped self, and at the same time to exalt and magnify it,—is the surest and most fruitful source of moral evil. Indeed, it may be doubted if there is any source of moral evil, apart from those which are purely sensual, which has not at least an underground connection with this. If we are to "cap" this deadly fountain, and so prevent it from desolating human life, we must realise, once and for all, that the two desires which master us cannot be simultaneously gratified; that we cannot both rest in the ordinary self and magnify it; that we can magnify it only by *making it great*, by helping it to grow. When we have realised this, we shall be ready to receive the further lesson that in proportion as the self magnifies itself by the natural process of growth, so does its desire to magnify itself gradually die away,—die away with the dawning consciousness that in and through the process of its growth it is outgrowing itself, forgetting itself, escaping from itself, that the thing which so ardently desired to be magnified is in fact ceasing to be. This vital

truth,—which my visits to Utopia have borne in upon me,—that healthy and harmonious growth is in its very essence *out*growth or escape from self, has depths of meaning which are waiting to be fathomed. For one thing, it means, if it has any meaning, that what is central in human nature is, not its inborn wickedness but its infinite capacity for good, not its rebellious instincts and backsliding tendencies but its many-sided effort to achieve perfection.

We must now make our choice between two alternatives. We must decide, once and for all, whether the function of education is to foster growth or to exact mechanical obedience. If we choose the latter alternative, we shall enter a path which leads in the direction of spiritual death. If we choose the former, we must cease to halt between two opinions, and must henceforth base our system of education, boldly and confidently, on the conviction that growth is in its essence a movement towards perfection, and therefore that self-realisation is the first and last duty of Man.

It is by answering possible objections to Utopianism that I shall best be able to unfold Egeria's philosophy of education. I shall perhaps be told that in my advocacy of that philosophy *I am preaching dangerous doctrines; that the only alternative for obedience is the lawlessness of unbridled licence; and that anarchy, social, moral, and spiritual, is the ultimate goal of the path which I am urging the teacher to enter.* Let me point out, in answer to this protest, that it is mechanical obedience which I condemn, not obedience as such.

If I condemn mechanical obedience, I do so because it is unworthy of the name of obedience, because the higher faculties of Man's being, the faculties which are distinctively human—reason, imagination, aspiration, spiritual intuition, and the like—take no part in it, because it is the obedience of an automaton, not of a living soul. What I wish to oppose to it is *vital obedience,* obedience to the master laws of Man's being, obedience to the laws which assert themselves as central and supreme, obedience more particularly to those larger and obscurer laws which obedience itself helps us to discover, obedience in fine to that hierarchy of laws—(the superior law always claiming the fuller measure and the higher kind of obedience)—which, if we are to use the Divine Name, we must needs identify with the will of God. Obedience, in this sense of the word, is a sustained and soul-deep effort in which all the higher faculties of Man's being take part, an effort which is in some sort a voyage of discovery, the doing of the more obvious duty being always rewarded by the deepening of the doer's insight and the widening of his outlook, and by the consequent unveiling to him of the way in which he is to walk and the goal at which he is to aim. That the path of soul-growth is the path of vital obedience can scarcely be doubted. The effort to grow is always successful just so far as it implies knowledge of the laws of the nature that is unfolding itself, and readiness to obey those laws; and so far as it is successful, it carries with it the outgrowth of the very faculties by which knowledge—the higher knowledge which makes further growth possible—is to be gained.

Here, as elsewhere, there is an unceasing interaction between perception and expression, between knowledge of law and obedience to law, what is given as obedience being received back as enlightenment, and what is received as enlightenment being given back as larger, fuller, and more significant obedience.

And, be it carefully observed, it is obedience to the laws of human nature, not obedience to the idiosyncrasies of the individual nature, which the process of soul-growth at once implies and makes possible. Growth is, in its essence, a movement towards that perfect type which is the real self of each individual in turn, and the approach to which involves the gradual surrender of individuality, and the gradual escape from the ordinary self. A man is to cling to and affirm his individuality, not in order that he may rest in it and make much of it, but in order that he may outgrow it and pass far beyond it in that one way—the best way for him—which it, and it alone, is able to mark out for him. In other words, he is to assert his individual self in order that he may universalise himself in his own way, and not in obedience to the ruling of custom and authority, in order that he may escape from himself through the real outlet of sincere self-expression, and not through the sham outlet of hypocrisy and cant.

What I may call the Utopian scheme of education, far from making for antinomianism and anarchy, is the sworn enemy of individualism and therefore, *a fortiori*, of everything that savours of licence. It is the conventional type of education, with its demands for mechanical obedience to

external authority, which leads through despotism to social and political chaos. The whole *régime* of mechanical obedience is favourable, in the long run, to the development of anarchy. Let us take the case of a church or an autocracy which demands implicit obedience from its subjects, and is prepared to exact such obedience by the application of physical force or its moral equivalent. What will happen to it when its subjects begin to ask it for its credentials? The fact that it has always demanded from them literal rather than spiritual obedience, and that, in its application of motive force, it has appealed to their baser desires and baser fears, makes it impossible for it to justify itself to their higher faculties, rational or emotional, and makes it necessary for it to meet their incipient criticism with renewed threats of punishment and renewed promises of reward. But the very fact that it is being asked for its credentials means that the force on which it has hitherto relied is weakening, that its power to punish and reward, which has always been resolvable into the power to make people believe that it can punish and reward, is being called in question and is therefore crumbling away. And behind that power there is nothing but chaos. For the *régime* of mechanical obedience, by arresting the spontaneous growth of Man's higher nature, and by making its chief appeal to his baser desires and baser fears, becomes of necessity the foster-mother of egoism; and when egoism, which makes each man a law to himself and the potential enemy of his kind, is unrestrained by authority, the door is thrown wide open to anarchy, and through anarchy to chaos. This is what is hap-

pening in the West, in our self-conscious and critical age. In every field of human action, in religion, in politics, in social life, in art, in letters, authority is being asked for its credentials; and as this demand, besides being a disintegrating influence, is a sign that the force on which authority relies is weakening, it is not to be wondered at that there is a steady drift in many Western countries in the direction of anarchy,—religious, political, social, artistic, literary,—or that this *régime* of incipient anarchy is taking the form of an ignoble scramble for wealth, for power, for position, for fame, for notoriety, for anything in fine which may serve to exalt a man above his fellows, and so minister to the aggrandizement of his lower self.

In this drift towards anarchy the school is playing its part. I do not wish to suggest that the boys and girls of this or any other Western country are beginning to ask their teachers for their credentials, or are likely to rise in rebellion against them. The preparation for anarchy that is going on in the school is not only quite compatible with what is known as "strict discipline," but is also, in part at least, the effect of it. What is happening is that in an acutely critical age the *régime* of mechanical obedience to external authority which has been in force in the West for nearly 2000 years, and which is now taking its victims straight towards anarchy, is being carefully rehearsed in our schools of all types and grades. During the years when human nature is most pliable (owing to its richness in sap), most easily trained, and most amenable to influence, good or evil, the

child's spontaneous effort to outgrow himself and so escape from his lower self,—an end which is not to be reached except by the path of free self-expression,—is persistently thwarted till at last it dies away; blind and literal obedience to external authority, for which the consent of his higher faculties is not asked, and in the giving of which they are not allowed to take part, is persistently exacted from him till at last his higher faculties cease to energise, and his lower nature begins to monopolise the rising sap of his life; in order to enforce the blind obedience that is asked for, an appeal is made, by an elaborate system of external rewards and external punishments, to his selfish desires and ignoble fears; while the examination system, with its inevitable accompaniments of prizes and class-lists, makes a special appeal to his competitive instincts,—instincts which are anti-social, and may even, in extreme cases, become anti-human in their tendency. And when authority has thus been presented to him, in a form which he has never been expected to welcome, and when, by the same process, the growth of his higher self has been arrested, and his anarchical instincts—his selfishness and self-assertion—have been systematically cultivated, the critical spirit and temper will be deliberately aroused in him, especially if he happens to attend one of those secondary schools which are regarded as highly efficient because their lists of University distinctions and other "successes" are inordinately long; for the education given to him in such a school by his scholarship-hunting teachers is of necessity so bookish and so one-sided that his intellectual, dialectically

critical faculties are apt to become hypertrophied, while other faculties which might have kept these in check are neglected and starved. The product of such a system of education,—benumbed or paralysed on many sides of his being by the repressive *régime* to which he has so long been subjected, but vigorously alive on the sides of egoism and intellectual criticism,—will be an anarchist *in posse* (unless, indeed, his vitality has been depressed by his school-life below the point at which reaction becomes possible);—an anarchist *in posse*, even though, in his terror of anarchism in others, he should become a pillar of the Established Church of his country, a J.P. of his town or county, and an active member of the nearest Conservative Association.

In Utopia, on the other hand, where selfishness is outgrown and forgotten, and where the spirit of comradeship and brotherhood pervades the school, there can be no preparation for anarchy, if only for the reason that there is no authority—no despotic authority, forcibly imposing its will on the school *ab extra*—to be potentially dethroned. For all her scholars, Egeria is the very symbol and embodiment of love, the centre whence all happy, harmonious, life-giving, peace-diffusing influences radiate, and to which, when they have vitalised the souls of the children and transformed themselves into sentiments of loyalty and devotion, they all return. I am not exaggerating a whit when I say that the Utopian school is an ideal community, a community whose social system, instead of being inspired by that spirit of "competitive selfishness" which makes "each for himself, and the devil take

the hindmost" its motto, seems to have realised the Socialistic dream of "Each for all, and all for each."

I shall perhaps be asked *what provision is made in Utopia for enabling the children to go through the drudgery of school-life, to master the "3 R's," to "get up" the various subjects which the Code prescribes, and so forth.* To this question there is but one answer: the best possible provision. "Qui veut la fin veut les moyens." In the life of organised play which the children lead, attractive ends are ever being set before them. If they are to achieve these ends, they must take the appropriate means. What children in other schools might regard as drudgery, the Utopian takes in his stride. Reading, writing, and arithmetic are means to ends beyond themselves, ends which are constantly presenting themselves to the Utopian. If he is to gratify his communicative instinct, he must learn to read and write. If he is to gratify his dramatic instinct, he must, *inter alia*, read with intelligence books of reference which would be considered too advanced for the ordinary school-child. If he is to gratify his inquisitive and constructive instincts, he must learn to count, measure, and calculate. For whatever means may have to be taken, must be taken by him. Egeria, as he knows well, will do nothing for him which he can reasonably be expected to do for himself. There are subjects, such as drawing, dancing, and singing, which are, or at any rate ought to be, intrinsically delightful, as being natural channels of self-expression. There are other subjects, such as history, geography, and

English, which can be made delightful by being treated dramatically. The word "drudgery" has no meaning for the Utopian child. A group of children in the highest class recently committed to memory the whole "Trial Scene" of the *Merchant of Venice*—some 300 lines or so of blank verse—in order that they might give themselves the pleasure of acting it. They accomplished this feat in a little more than a month. In the ordinary elementary school the child who has committed 150 lines to memory in the course of a year has done all that is required of him. The getting up of a subject is drudgery only when the child can see no meaning in what he is doing, only when the getting up of the subject is regarded as an end in itself. In Utopia no subject, apart from those which I have spoken of as intrinsically delightful, is taught for its own sake. Subjects are taught there either as the means to desired ends, or because they afford opportunities for the training of the expansive instincts, the gratification of which is a pure pleasure to every healthy child.

But not only does the Utopian child, with his eyes always fixed on desirable ends, find a pleasure in doing things which other children are wont to regard as drudgery, but he has the further advantage of being able to master with comparative facility what other children find difficult as well as distasteful. From first to last, the training given in Utopia makes, as we have seen, for the development of faculty. In my last chapter I set forth in detail some of the ways and means by which Egeria tries to cultivate the expansive instincts of her pupils. Behind all these ways and means stands

the master method—or shall I say the master principle?—of self-expression. Recognising, as she does, that each of the expansive instincts is a definite expression of the soul's spontaneous effort to grow, and a clear indication of a particular direction in which Nature wishes the soul to grow,—and recognising, as she also does, that the business of growing must be done by the growing organism and cannot be delegated to any one else,—Egeria entrusts the work of self-realisation to the child himself, and makes no attempt to relieve him of an obligation which no one but himself can discharge.

Now self-realisation is a twofold process. In the absence of a fitter and more adequate word, I have applied the term *perceptive* to those faculties by means of which we lay hold upon the world that surrounds us, and draw it into ourselves and make it our own. And I have contended that this group of faculties has, as its counterpart and correlate, another group of faculties which I have called *expressive*,—the faculties by means of which we go out of ourselves into the world that surrounds us, and give ourselves to it and try to identify ourselves with it,—and that the relation between these two groups is so vital and so intimate that each in turn may be regarded as the very life and soul of the other. In words which I have already used, the perceptive faculties, at any rate in childhood, grow through the interpretation which expression gives them, and in no other way, and the expressive faculties grow by interpreting perception, and in no other way. That these two groups of faculties are, as it were, the reciprocating engines by means of which the vital movement which we call self-realisa-

tion is effected, is the conviction on which Egeria's whole scheme of education may be said to be pivoted. In Utopia self-expression is the medium through which the expansive instincts are encouraged to unfold themselves. And this life of self-expression has as its necessary counterpart the continuous development of the perceptive faculties along the whole range of the child's nature.

Hence the all-round capacity of the Utopian child. The development of his perceptive faculties which his life of self-expression tends to produce, takes many forms. One of these, and one which in some sort underlies and interpenetrates all the rest, is the outgrowth of what I may call the *intuitional* faculty,—a general capacity for getting into touch with any new environment in which the child may find himself, of subconsciously apprehending its laws and properties, of feeling his way through its unexplored land. It is by means of this capacity for putting forth a new *sense* in response to the stimulus of each new environment, that the Utopian child is able to master with comparative ease the various subjects which he is expected to learn. And not with ease only, but with effect. It is, as we have seen, through the action of an appropriate sense, and in no other way, that the information which is supplied to the scholar, when he is learning this or that subject, is converted into *knowledge*, and is so made available both for the further understanding of the given subject and for the nutrition of the scholar's own inner life.

From every point of view, then, the Utopian scholar has a marked advantage, in respect of the things with which education is supposed to be

mainly concerned—the mastery of subjects and the acquisition of knowledge—over the product of the conventional type of school. Whatever the Utopian may have to learn, is a pleasure to him either for its own sake or as a means to some desirable end. Whatever he may have to learn, he learns with comparative ease, because his perceptive faculties have been systematically trained, and he is therefore at home, in greater or lesser degree, in any new environment. And whatever he may have to learn, he learns with effect, because he is able to digest the information that he receives, and convert it into knowledge, and so retain it in the form in which it will best conduce both to his further progress in that particular branch of study and to the general building up of his mind.

In the ordinary result-hunting school the scholar fares very differently from this. As a rule, he takes but little pleasure in his work, for subjects which have their chief value as means to desirable ends are presented to him as ends in themselves, and as such are rightly regarded by him as meaningless and therefore as intolerably dull; while subjects which are either intrinsically attractive, as being natural channels of self-expression, or potentially attractive as providing opportunities for self-expression, have no attraction for him, as in neither case is self-expression on his part permitted. Again, he finds great difficulty in mastering the subjects on his time-table, or even in making the first step towards mastering them, for, owing to his perceptive faculties as a whole having been starved by the repressive *régime* which denied them the outlet of expression, he has not evolved the power of

putting forth an appropriate sense in response to the stimulus of a new environment, and is therefore helpless in the presence of what is unfamiliar or unexpected. One of his faculties, his memory, has indeed been hypertrophied by being unduly exercised, and his capacity for receiving information is in consequence unhealthily great; but because he lacks, in this case or in that, the *sense* which might enable him to digest the information received and convert it into knowledge, the food with which he has been crammed speedily passes through him, undigested and unassimilated, and the hours which he has spent in acquiring information will have done as little for his progress in the given subject as for the general growth of his mind.

The difference between the two schemes of education—that which exacts mechanical obedience, and that which seeks to foster growth—may be looked at from another point of view. Under the former, interference with what I may call the subconscious processes of Nature is at its maximum. Under the latter, at its minimum. In order to realise what this means let us suppose that such interference were possible where fortunately it is and must ever be impossible,—in the first and second years of the child's life. Fortunately for the child, it is impossible for us to educate him, in any formal sense of the word, until he has mastered his mother tongue. Were it otherwise, his mother tongue would never be mastered. Before he reaches the age of two the child accomplishes the marvellous feat of acquiring an entirely new language. While he is learning it Nature is his only teacher, and under her tuition he masters the new language without the least strain

and with complete success. But let us suppose that it was possible for a teacher of the conventional type to give minute directions to a child by some other medium of expression than that of language. And let us suppose that such a teacher made up her mind that she, and not Nature, was to teach the child his mother tongue. One can readily imagine what would happen. The teacher would probably have a theory that no child should begin to talk till he was two or even two and a half years old; and if so, the child would be kept in a state of enforced dumbness till he reached that age. In any case, he would be strictly forbidden to speak till his teacher gave him formal permission to do so. Half-an-hour in the morning, and half-an-hour in the afternoon would probably be set aside for the language lesson. For so many weeks or months the child would be strictly limited to words of two or three letters. For so many more weeks or months, to words of four or five letters. Things which had names of more than the prescribed number of letters would be kept away from the child; or, if that was impossible, he would not be allowed to talk about them. For half a year perhaps he would be limited to the use of nouns and verbs. Prepositions might then be introduced into his vocabulary; and, later, adjectives and adverbs. And so on; and so on. And the outcome of all this elaborate training would be that the child would never learn to talk his mother tongue.

It is by methods analogous in all respects to this that many of the subjects on the time-table are taught in thousands of our schools. The teacher seems to imagine that he knows, fully and pre-

cisely, how each subject ought to be taught; and instead of standing aside, and trying to learn how Nature wishes this or that subject to be taught (if Nature can be said to take any interest in "subjects"), and then trying to co-operate with her subconscious tendencies, he makes out his elaborate scheme of instruction, sets before the child as the goal of his efforts the production of certain formal results, and drives him towards these with whip and bridle, satisfied that if he succeeds in producing them, the subject will have been duly mastered. And all the time he will not have given a thought to what is happening to the child's inner life. Yet it is more than probable that the teacher's disregard of, and therefore incessant interference with, the subconscious processes of Nature has quite as disastrous results in the teaching of composition, let us say, or drawing, as it would certainly have in the hypothetical case of the teaching of the child's mother tongue.

But in truth the Utopian conception of what constitutes efficiency differs so radically from the current conception, that little is to be gained by comparing them. If I am asked by those who value outward and visible results for their own sake, whether the training given in Utopia is "efficient," I can but answer: "Yes, but efficient in a sense which you cannot even begin to understand,—efficient in the sense of developing faculty and fostering life, whereas the price paid for your boasted efficiency is the starvation of faculty and the destruction of life."

"*But how*," it will be asked, "*are the Utopian*

children, one and all, induced to exert themselves? The standard of activity in the school is, on your own showing, exceptionally high. Much is expected of the children. Yet there are no rewards for them to hope for, and no punishments for them to fear. How, then, are those who are by nature less energetic or less persevering than the rest to be induced to rise to the level of the teacher's expectation?" By implication this question has been answered again and again. But it deserves a direct answer, and I will try to give it one.

To begin with, it is incorrect to say that there are no rewards or punishments in Utopia. Outward rewards and outward punishments are entirely unknown there; but there are inward rewards to be had for the seeking, and there are inward punishments to be feared, though it must be admitted that the fear of them seldom overshadows, even for a passing moment, the sunlit life of the Utopian child. What induces the Utopian child to work is, in brief, delight in his work. He is allowed and even encouraged to energise along the lines which his nature seems to have marked out for him, and in response to the stress of forces which seem to be welling up from the depths of his inner life. Exertion of this kind is in itself a delight. Nature has taken care to make all the exercises by which growth is fostered, at any rate in the days of childhood when growth is most rapid and vigorous, intrinsically attractive. Had she done otherwise she would have failed to make due provision for the growth of Man's being during the years which precede the outgrowth of self-

consciousness, and the possibility of self-discipline, of the narrower and sterner kind.

And not only are the exercises by which healthy and harmonious growth is secured intrinsically attractive, but also the sense of well-being which accompanies such growth is an unfailing source of happiness. In Utopia the end for which the children are working is not an external reward or prize to be conferred on them if they achieve certain prescribed results, but rather the actual goal to which the path that they have entered is taking them,—a goal which is ever lighting the path with its foreglow, and which is therefore at once an infinitely distant lodestar and an ever present delight. For the consummation of any process of growth is always the perfection, the final well-being, of the thing that grows; and therefore in each successive stage of the process there is a truer prefigurement of the perfection which is being gradually achieved, and a fuller sense of that well-being which, at its highest level, is perfection's other self.

For the Utopian, then, to walk in the path of self-realisation is its own reward; and to wander from that path is its own punishment. But as the forces of Nature are all co-operating to keep the child in the path of self-realisation, and as Egeria has allied herself with those forces and is working with them in every possible way, the rewards which the Utopian wins for himself are very many, while the punishments which he inflicts on himself are very few. In other words, the pressure on him to exert himself is so strong, his opportunities for exerting himself (under Egeria's sympathetic rule) are so many, and the pleasure of exerting himself

is found to be so great, that the temptation to be idle or rebellious can scarcely be said to exist.

It is indeed in respect of the motives to exertion which they respectively supply, that the superiority of the Utopian to the conventional type of education is perhaps most pronounced. I have said that Egeria allies herself with the expansive forces of Nature. The teacher of the conventional type has to fight against those forces. Let us assume that the two teachers are on a level in respect of their capacity for influencing and stimulating their pupils, and let us indicate that level by the algebraical symbol x. Then the difference between the motive force which Egeria exerts, and the motive force which her rival exerts, is the difference between $x + y$, and $x - y$, y being used to symbolise the aggregate motive force of the expansive tendencies of the child's inner nature. Such a difference is incalculable. The scheme of education which is based on distrust of the child's nature and belief in its intrinsic sinfulness and stupidity, necessarily arrays against itself the hidden forces of that maligned and despised nature, and must needs overcome their resistance before it can hope to achieve its proposed end. While Egeria is helping Nature to provide suitable channels for the various expansive tendencies that are at work in the child, and to guide them all into the central channel of self-realisation, her rival is engaged in digging a canal (to be filled, when finished, with dead, stagnant water) which is so designed that not only will no use be made by it of the life stream of the child's latent energies, but also costly culverts and other works will have to be constructed for it in

order to divert and send to waste that troublesome current.

The waste of motive force which goes on under any scheme of education through mechanical obedience, is indeed enormous. And what is most lamentable is that the energies of the teacher are being largely wasted in the effort to neutralise the latent energies of the child. No wonder that, in order to produce his meagre and illusory "results," the teacher should have to resort to motive forces which, by appealing to the lower side of the child's nature, will enable him to bear down the resistance, and, in doing so, to impede the outgrowth of the higher,—to the hope of external rewards and the threat of external punishments. And no wonder that, owing to the teacher having to work unceasingly against the grain of the child's nature, of these two demoralising forces, the fear of punishment—which, if not the more demoralising, is certainly the more wasteful of energy—should bulk the more largely in the eyes of the child.

In fine, then, whereas the conventional type of education is so wasteful of motive force that it dissipates the greater part of the teachers' and the scholars' energies in needless friction,—in Utopia, on the other hand, there is such an economy of motive force that the very joy which, under its scheme of education, always accompanies the child's expenditure of energy, and which might be regarded as merely a waste by-product, becomes in its turn a powerful incentive to further exertion.

"*But is there not too much joy in Utopia? Is not the sky too cloudless? Is not the atmosphere*

too clear? Does the Utopian never act from a sense of duty? Has he never to do anything that is distasteful to him?" This objection raises an interesting question. Is the function of the sense of duty to enable us to do distasteful things? And if so, are we to regard it as the highest of motives to moral action? In the days when Kant's idea of the "moral imperative" was in the ascendant, the belief got abroad that the essence of virtue was to do what you hated doing. Looking back to my Oxford days, I recall some doggerel lines, of German origin, in which this belief finds apt expression. A disciple who is in trouble about his soul says to his master:

> "Willing serve I my friends, but do it, alas! with affection,
> And so gnaws me my heart, that I'm not virtuous yet."

To this the master replies:

> "Help except this there is none: you must strive with might to contemn them,
> And with horror perform then what the law may enjoin."

If this conception of morality is correct, if it is true that the atmosphere of the virtuous life should be one of horror and even of hatred, then it must be admitted that the Utopian children are receiving a seriously defective education. But the "if" is a large one; and for my part I incline to the belief that love, as a motive to action, is better than hatred, joy than horror, sunshine than gloom.

The day will indeed come when the Utopian—a child no longer—will have to do things, either for his own sake or in order to discharge obligations to others, which will be, or will seem to be, against the grain even of his happy nature; and

the sense of duty will then have to come to his aid. But there is no reason why he, or his teachers, should anticipate that day. To compel him, while still a child, to work against the grain of his nature, when there was no real need for this, would not be the best preparation for the trials that await him. To compel him to spend the greater part of his school-life in doing what was distasteful to him, would be the worst possible preparation for them.

For, to begin with, the sense of duty is not the highest motive to action. A far higher motive is love. If the sense of duty to God, for example, had not devotion to God and love of God behind it, the object of one's worship would be a malignant rather than a beneficent deity, a devil rather than a God. Or let us take the case of a child who is dangerously ill, and who needs to be carefully and even devotedly nursed. By whom will he be the more effectively nursed,—by his mother who loves him passionately, or by a hired nurse who cannot be expected to love him but who has a strong sense of duty to her employers? (I am assuming that as regards professional skill, and the sense of duty to God, the two women are on a level.) Surely the mother, sustained by love in the endurance of sleeplessness and fatigue, and in the exercise of that unceasing vigilance which lets no symptom escape it, will be the better nurse. Love, as a motive to moral action, has the immense advantage over the sense of duty of being able to rob the hour of trial of its gloom, by strengthening the lover to make light of labour and difficulty till at last the sense of effort is lost in the sense of joy. But if love is the highest of all motives, is it not well that

the child's life should as far as possible, and for as long as possible, be kept under its influence, to the exclusion of other motives. We have seen that the Utopian child takes many things in his stride which other children would regard as distasteful. If they are not distasteful to him, the reason is that he does them, not from a sense of duty, but under the inspiration of love,—love of life, love of Egeria, love of his schoolmates, love of his school. And the longer he can remain on the high plane of love, the better it will be for his after life.

And when the time comes for him to yield himself to the "saving arms" of duty, he will have had the best of all preparations for that hour of trial, for he will have been braced and strengthened for it by the most moralising of all disciplines, that of growth. What is the sense of duty? We too seldom ask ourselves this question. Is it not a feeling of obligation, of being in debt, to some person, or persons, or institution, or society, or even to some invisible Power;—to a friend, for example, a relative, a dependent, an employer, a "contracting party," a commanding officer,—or, again, to one's trade or profession, to one's political party, to one's church, to one's country,—or, in the last resort, to God? And is not this feeling accompanied by the secret conviction that until the debt has been liquidated, to the best of the debtor's ability, justice will not have been done? The sense of duty is, I think, a derivative sense, an offshoot from the more primitive sense of justice,—a sense so primitive that it may almost be said to have made possible our social life. If this is so, if the sense of duty is resolvable into the sense of justice, then the

training which is given in Utopia—a training which makes for healthy and harmonious growth, and therefore (as we have seen) for *out*growth or escape from self—is the best preparation for a life of duty, that can possibly be given. For under its influence the sense of justice, which is essentially a social instinct, knowing no distinction between oneself and one's neighbour, will be relieved of the hostile pressure of its arch-enemy, the anti-social instinct of selfishness,[1] and will therefore make rapid and vigorous growth. The sense of justice is, as might be expected, strongly developed in the selfless atmosphere of Utopia, where indeed it has helped, in no small degree, to evolve the wonderful social life of the school; and, that being so, there is no fear but what the Utopian will be sustained by the sense of duty when the time comes for him to work against the grain of his nature. But however strong may be his sense of duty, he will always have the great advantage of being seldom called upon to do what he dislikes, and therefore of being able to keep the fibre of his sense of duty from being either unduly relaxed or unduly hardened by overwork; for he has been accustomed from his earliest days to make light of, and even find a

[1] The sense of justice, which would give to each his due, and therefore not more than his due to oneself, seems to hold the balance between selfishness and love, being as it were, equidistant from the greed and self-indulgence of the former and the lavishness and self-devotion of the latter. If this is so, and if the sense of duty is, as I have suggested, an offshoot from the sense of justice, one can understand why, on the one hand, the sense of duty should be needed to hold the self-seeking instincts in check, and why, on the other hand, it should be an altogether lower and weaker motive than love, by which indeed, *in its own interest*, it should always be ready to be superseded.

pleasure in, what is usually accounted drudgery, and he has been accustomed to work, in school and out of school, under the inspiration of joy and love.

But is the education given in Utopia useful? I wish I knew who was asking this question, for I cannot hope to answer it to his satisfaction until I know what is his standard of values. What end does he set before the teachers of our elementary schools? If he would tell me this, I might be able to say Yes or No to his question.

At present there seems to be no agreement among educationalists, professional or amateur, as to what constitutes usefulness in education. Those who belong to the "upper classes" are apt to assume that the "lower orders" will have been adequately educated when they have been taught reading, writing, arithmetic, needlework, and "religion," subjected to a certain amount of repressive discipline, and compelled to go to church or chapel. If, after having passed through this mill, the children of the "lower orders" do not develop into good men and women and useful citizens, it is not their education which is to blame, but the inborn sinfulness of their corrupt and fallen natures. Such an education is regarded by those who advocate it as pre-eminently *useful*. There is no nonsense about it, no cant of idealism, no taint of socialism. It keeps the "lower orders" in their places, and forbids them to dream of rising above "that state of life unto which it" has pleased "God to call them." As it is a *reductio ad absurdum* of the conventional type of education, my objection to it is that it makes the best possible provision for securing the end which

the conventional type seems to have set before itself,—in other words, for depressing the vitality of the child, for starving his faculties, for arresting his growth. As such, it has not even the merit of being sordidly useful; for unless stupidity is a better thing than intelligence, slowness than alertness, helplessness than initiative, lifelessness than vital activity, the child who has passed through that dreary mill will be far less effective, even as a day-labourer, than the child whose school-life has been one of continuous and many-sided growth. It is strange that the reactionary members of the "upper classes" should be too short-sighted to discern this obvious truth. But perhaps they have a secret conviction that by so educating the "lower orders" as to make them slow and stupid, helpless and lifeless, they will be the better able to keep them in a state of subservience to and dependence on themselves.[1] If this is so, there is method in the madness of the "upper classes"; and their conception of the course that education ought to take has the merit of being entirely true to their basely selfish conception of the end that education ought to serve.

I have alluded to this pseudo-utilitarian theory, not because it is intrinsically worthy of serious attention, but because there is undoubtedly a strong and influential current of opinion which sets in its

[1] I was once present when the Utopian children were going through a programme of Folk Songs and Morris Dances in the village hall. A lady who was looking on remarked to me: "This is all very fine; but if this sort of thing goes on, where are we going to find our servants?" The selfishness of this remark is obvious. What is less obvious, but more significant, is its purblindness. In point of fact the Utopian girls make excellent domestic servants, and are well content to "go into service."

direction. There are other advocates of a "useful" education who seem to regard the elementary school, not as a training ground for good men and women, but as a kind of technical institute in which the children are to be trained for the various callings by which, when they grow up, they will have to earn their daily bread. This theory need not be seriously considered, for its inherent absurdity has caused it to be tacitly abandoned by all whose opinion carries weight; and the more reasonable theory that the education given in the elementary school should be as far as possible adapted to the environment of the school—that it should be given a rural bias, for example, or a marine bias, or even an urban bias—has begun to take its place. That it should ever have found advocates is interesting as showing how easy it is for unenlightened public opinion to misinterpret the word "useful."[1]

There is a third class of critics, composed for the most part of members of Local Education Committees, who seem to think that ability to pass a "leaving" examination is the only valid proof of the usefulness of elementary education. If these influential critics, who are showing in various ways that they care more for machinery than for life, could have their will, they would probably revert to the "good old days" of cut-and-dried syllabuses, formal examinations of individual scholars, percentages of passes, and the like. As I have already taken pains to explain what the *régime* of the "good

[1] Some two or three years ago it was seriously proposed that *marine navigation* should be taught in all the elementary schools of a certain maritime county!

old days" really meant, I need not waste my time in exposing the fallacies which underlie this conception of "usefulness."

Here, then, are three distinct standards of usefulness in elementary education. According to the first, education is useful in proportion as it tends, by repressing the activities and atrophying the faculties of the scholars, to keep the "lower orders" in their places, and in so doing to provide the "upper classes" with a sufficiency of labourers and servants. According to the second, it is useful in proportion as it is able to prepare the scholars for their various callings in after life.[1] According to the third, in proportion as it enables the scholars to pass with credit certain "leaving" and other examinations of a formal type.

I will now assume that the end of education is to produce, or at any rate contribute to the production of, good men and women; and that the education given in elementary schools is useful in exact proportion as it serves this end. I am not using the word "good" in its Sunday School sense. Nor does the word suggest to my mind that blend of stupidity, patience, and submissiveness which sometimes passes for "goodness" when the "upper classes" are taking thought for the welfare of the "lower orders." The good man, as I understand the phrase, is a good son, a good brother, a good husband, a good father, a good citizen, a good townsman, a good workman, a good servant, a

[1] The parent who wrote to a schoolmaster, "Please do not teach my boy any more poetry, as he is going to be a grocer," must have been under the influence of this conception of usefulness.

good master. In fine, he is a good specimen of his kind, well grown and well developed, efficient on all the planes of his being,—physical, mental, moral, spiritual. This conception of what constitutes useful education differs radically from those which I have just been considering; but I believe that when it has been adequately expounded, and submitted to the judgment of those whose opinion is worth having, it will not be seriously gainsaid.

If education is useful in proportion as it tends to produce good men and women, the education given in Utopia is useful to the highest degree. For a child cannot become a good man (or woman) except by *growing* good; and if he is to grow good, his nature must be allowed to develop itself freely and harmoniously (for just so far as it is normal and healthy it is necessarily making for its own perfection), and the one end and aim of the teacher must be to stimulate and direct this process of spontaneous growth. This, as we have seen, is the one end and aim of Egeria; and it is therefore clear that she is taking effective steps—the most effective that can possibly be taken—to produce good men and women. We have but to name the qualities which are characteristic, as we have already seen, of her pupils and ex-pupils,—activity, versatility, imaginative sympathy, a large and free outlook, self-forgetfulness, charm of manner, joy of heart,—in order to convince ourselves that those who have passed through the Utopian school are on the high road which leads to "goodness." So obvious is all this, that in defining the word "useful" I may be said to have decided the question in favour of

Utopia; and what is now in dispute is not whether Utopianism is "useful," in any sense of the word, but whether my sense of the word is the right one.

I cannot go much further into this question without exceeding the limits of the theme which I am handling in this chapter. For in considering the after life of the Utopian child, I am entering a region in which the idea of *education* begins to merge itself in the larger idea of *salvation;* and though education, as begun in Utopia, is in its essence a life-long process, I must pay some heed to the limits which tradition and custom have imposed on the meaning of the word.

But before I close this chapter I must be allowed to give one illustration in support of my contention that the education given in Utopia is useful. Of the many complaints that are brought against the output of our elementary schools, one of the most serious is that the boys and girls who have recently left school are voracious readers of a vicious and demoralising literature which seems to be provided for their special benefit. The reason why they take so readily to this garbage is that they have lost their appetite for wholesome food. They are not interested in healthy literature, in Nature-study, in music, in art, in handicraft,—in any pursuit which might take them out of themselves into a larger and freer life; and so they fall victims to the allurements of a literature which appeals to their baser, more sensual, and more selfish instincts,—the very instincts which growth (in the true sense of the word) spontaneously relegates to a subordinate position and places under effective control. It is the inertness, the apathy, the low vitality of the average

child of fourteen, which is the cause of his undoing. His taste for false and meretricious excitement—a taste which may lead him far along the downward path—is the outcome of his very instinct to live, an instinct which, though repressed by the influences that have choked its natural channels, cannot resign itself to extinction, and at last, in its despairing effort to energise, forces for itself the artificial outlet of an imaginative interest in vice and crime.

The "young person" who, on leaving school, becomes a voracious devourer of unwholesome literature, cannot be said to have received a "useful" education. That vice and crime—whether practised or imagined—are in the first instance artificial outlets, outlets which the soul would not use if its expansive instincts were duly fostered, is proved by the absence of "naughtiness" in the Utopian school, and the absence of any taste for morbid excitement amongst Utopian ex-scholars. The unwholesome literature which gives so much concern to those who are interested in the welfare of the young, is unknown in Utopia. And in this, as in other matter, the "goodness" of the children and "young persons" is due, not to any lack of life and spirit, but to the very abundance of their vitality. Apart from the fact that vigorous growth, whether in plant or animal or human soul, is in itself a sure prophylactic against the various evils to which growing life is exposed, the Utopians are guarded against the danger of demoralising books and demoralising amusements by their many-sided interest in life. Their instinct to live, finding natural and adequate outlets in many directions,

has no need to force for itself the artificial outlet of morbid excitement,—an outlet for imprisoned energies, which has too often proved an opening to a life of vice and crime. There is a Shakespeare in every cottage in Utopia; but the advocates of a repressive and restrictive education for the "lower orders" need not be alarmed at this, for the Utopians, who have found the secret of true happiness, are freer than most villagers from social discontent. Nor are Egeria's ex-pupils less efficient as labourers or domestic servants because they are interested in good literature, in Nature-study, in acting, or because they can still dance the Morris Dances and sing the Folk Songs which they learned in school.

CHAPTER VI

SALVATION THROUGH SELF-REALISATION

In Utopia the transition from *education* to *salvation*, both in theory and practice, is obvious and direct. The difference between education and salvation is, indeed, purely nominal: in their essence the two processes are one. As the education given in Utopia is, in the main, self-education, there is no reason why it should not be continued indefinitely after the child has left school; and as its function is to foster the growth of the child's many-sided nature (with its vast potentialities), there is every reason why it should be continued as long as he lives. In other words, the path of salvation is the path of self-realisation, the most important part of which is traversed in childhood; and to attain to salvation (which is in a sense unattainable) is to remain faithful to that path till it passes beyond our thought.

Outside Utopia there is a widely different conception of the meaning and purpose of education, and a correspondingly different conception of the nature of salvation and the means by which it is to be achieved. The idea of salvation, with the complementary idea of perdition, may be regarded as the crown and completion of that scheme of external rewards and punishments which plays so

prominent a part in Western education. Salvation, which is the highest of all external rewards, just as perdition is the severest of all external punishments, is not a path to be followed, but a state of happiness to be won and enjoyed. It follows that the relation between education and salvation is, in the main, one of analogy, rather than of identity (as in Utopia), or even of vital connection. Or shall we say that education is not so much the first act in the drama of salvation as the first rehearsal of the play?

There are, of course, two conceptions of salvation in the West, just as there are two worlds to be lived in,—the Supernatural world and the world of Nature.

In what are called religious circles, to be saved is to have gained admission to Heaven, and, in doing so, to have escaped the torment and misery of Hell. There was a time when Hell was taken very seriously; but the idea of never-ending torment and misery is found, when steadily faced, to be so intolerable that popular thought, even in religious circles, is now turning away from it; and so loosely do men sit, in these "degenerate days," to the old doctrine of eternal punishment, that "to die" and "to go to heaven" are becoming interchangeable terms. But if all men are to be admitted to Heaven (or to its ante-room, Purgatory) at the end of this, their one earth-life, it is clear that there can be no causal connection between conduct and salvation. For though there may be degrees of happiness in Heaven to reward the varying degrees of virtue on earth, all these are dwarfed to nothing by the unimaginable abyss of difference which yawns between Heaven and Hell; and the practical upshot of the

current eschatology is that all men—the self-sacrificing equally with the self-indulgent, the kind and compassionate equally with the hard-hearted, the spiritually-minded equally with the worldly, the aspiring equally with the indifferent—are to reap the same reward. If a man is a notoriously evil liver, those who have suffered at his hands or been violently scandalised by his conduct may perhaps find a sombre pleasure in consigning him to Hell, which, indeed, might otherwise have to put up its shutters. But though the doors of Heaven may be closed against a few exceptional scoundrels, they are nowadays thrown open to all the rest of Mankind; and the maxim, "Live anyhow, and you will be saved somehow," seems to sum up with tolerable accuracy the popular attitude towards the twofold problem of duty and destiny.

I do not for a moment suggest that this happy-go-lucky eschatology is formally countenanced by the Churches and Sects. They would doubtless repudiate it with indignation; but the fact remains that their own teaching is largely responsible for it. For not only is the idea of *natural* retribution wholly foreign to the genius of supernaturalism, but also, in the two great schools of Western theology, there is, and always has been, a strong tendency to undervalue conduct (in the broad, human sense of the word), and to make the means of salvation mechanical rather than vital. At any rate the sacramental teaching of the Catholic Church, and the Calvinistic doctrine of salvation through faith in the finished work of Christ, readily lend themselves to such an interpretation.

So ineffective is the current eschatology, in its

bearing on conduct, that the latent energy of Man's nature—his latent desire to have a central purpose in life—is compelling him to work out for himself another and a more mundane conception of salvation, to set before himself as the end of life the winning of certain temporal prizes, and to keep this end steadily in view from day to day and from year to year. Such a conception of salvation has always had a strong attraction for him, though in his more orthodox days he found it desirable to subordinate it to, or if possible harmonise it with, the conception which his religion dictated to him; and of late its attractiveness has been increased by the fact that he is beginning to throw his eschatology (even in its present emasculated form) to the winds.

So far, I have had in my mind those quarters of Western thought in which the belief in the reality of the soul and the kindred belief in immortality still survive. But in point of fact both beliefs are dying before our eyes,—dying as a dumb protest against the inadequacy of the popular philosophy, against the intrinsic incredibility of its premises, against its fundamental misconception of the meaning of life and the nature and conditions of salvation, above all against the way in which the beliefs themselves have been persistently misinterpreted and travestied. And where the beliefs are dying, the latent externalism and materialism of Western thought and Western life are able to assert themselves without let or hindrance. "To be saved," as the phrase is now widely understood, means to get on in life, to succeed in business or in a profession, to make money, to rise in the social scale (if necessary, on the shoulders of others), to force one's way

to the front (if necessary, by trampling down others), to be talked about in the daily papers, to make a "splash" in some circle or coterie,—in these and in other ways to achieve some measure of what is called "success."

And in proportion as this mundane conception of salvation tends to establish itself, so does the drift towards social and political anarchy, which is now beginning to alarm all the lovers of order and "progress," tend to widen its range and accelerate its movement. For though the current idea of achieving salvation through "success" is a comfortable doctrine for the successful few, it is the reverse of comfortable for the unsuccessful many, among whom the idea is gaining ground that as salvation is the reward, not of virtue, but of a judicious blend of cleverness, unscrupulousness, selfishness, and greed, there is no reason, in the moral order of things, why it should not be wrested from those who are enjoying it, either by organised social warfare or by open violence and crime. And even if an anarchical outbreak should result in perdition all round instead of salvation all round, it would at least be some consolation to the "lost" to feel that they had dragged the "saved" down into their own bottomless pit. This would not be a lofty sentiment; yet I do not see who is in a position to condemn it,—not the supporter of the existing social order, which legalises a general scramble, first for the "prizes" of life and then for the bare means of subsistence, and is well content that in that scramble the weak, the ignorant, and the unfortunate should go to the wall,—not the exponent of the conventional theology, which has

taught men to dream of a Heaven in which the happiness of the "elect" will be unruffled by the knowledge that an eternity of misery is the doom of perhaps a majority of their fellow-men.

In the West, then, there are two conceptions of salvation,—a selfish, worldly conception which is daily becoming more effective, and a selfish other-worldly conception which is daily becoming more ineffective, and is therefore less and less able to compete with or control its rival. Out of the attempts that are made to realise both these conceptions and to keep them on friendly terms with one another, there is emerging a state of chaos—political, social, moral, spiritual,—a weltering chaos of new and old ideals, new and old theories of life, new and old standards of values, new and old centres of authority, new and old ambitions and dreams. And in this chaos there are only two principles of order, the first (which is also the ultimate cause of all our disorder) being the pathetic fact that nearly all the actors in the bewildering drama are still seeking for happiness outside themselves, the second being the fundamental goodness of man's heart.

I will now go back to Utopia. There a new conception of salvation is implicit in the new theory of education which has revolutionised the life of the school. Humble as is the sphere and small as is the scale of Egeria's labours, her work is, I firmly believe, of world-wide importance and lasting value, for she has provided an experimental basis for the idea that salvation is to be achieved by growth, and growth alone.

I will now try to interpret that idea.

The education of the child in school begins when he is four or five years old, and lasts till he is thirteen or fourteen. But he enters the path of salvation the day he is born. He comes into the world a weak, helpless baby; but, like every other seedling, he has in him all the potencies of perfection,—the perfection of his kind. To realise those potencies, so far as they can be realised within the limits of one earth-life, is to achieve salvation. Are those potencies worth realising? To this question I can but answer: "Such as they are, they are our all." We might ask the same question with regard to an acorn or a grain of wheat; and in each case the answer would be the same. There are, indeed, plants and animals which are noxious *from our point of view*. But that is not the view which they take of themselves. Each of them regards his own potencies in the light of a sacred trust, and strives with untiring energy to realise them. If the potencies of our nature are not worth realising we had better give up the business of living. If they are, we had better fall into line with other living things.

An unceasing pressure is being put upon us to do so. The perfect manhood which is present in embryo in the new-born infant, just as the oak-tree is present in embryo in the acorn, will struggle unceasingly to evolve itself. With the dawn of self-consciousness, we shall gradually acquire the power of either co-operating with, or thwarting, the spontaneous energies that are welling up in us and making for our growth. In this respect we stand, in some sort, apart from the rest of living

things. But the power to co-operate with our own spontaneous energies is to the full as natural as are the energies themselves. To fathom the mystery of self-consciousness is beyond my power and beside my present purpose; but we may perhaps regard our power of interfering, for good or ill, with the spontaneous energies of our nature, as the outcome of a successful effort which our nature has made both to widen the sphere of its own life and to accelerate the process of its own growth. But just because we possess that power, it is essential that we, above all other living things, should believe in ourselves, should believe in the intrinsic value of our natural potencies, with a whole-hearted faith. For if we do not, we shall hinder instead of helping the forces that are at work in us, and we shall retard instead of accelerating the process of our growth.

We have seen that education in the West has hitherto been a failure because, owing to the ascendency of the doctrine of original sin, it has been based on distrust of human nature; and we have seen that in Utopia, where Egeria's faith in human nature is so profound that she has allowed the children to go far towards educating themselves, the results achieved have gone beyond my wildest dream of what was practicable, at any rate within the limits of the school life of village children. What is true of education is true *a fortiori* of salvation. If it is impossible to construct a satisfactory scheme of education on the basis of distrust of human nature, it is even more impossible (if there are degrees in impossibility) to construct on the same basis a satisfactory scheme of salvation. I

have already contended that if education is to be reformed, the doctrine of original sin must go; and I now contend that if our philosophy of life is to be reformed, we must abandon, not that doctrine only, but the whole dualistic philosophy which centres in the opposition of Nature to the Supernatural. For trust in human nature—the microcosm—is impossible, so long as Nature—the macrocosm—is liable to be disparaged and discredited (in our minds) by the visionary splendours of the Supernatural world; and to devise a harmonious scheme of life is impossible so long as an inharmonious conception of the Universe dominates our thought, —a conception so inharmonious that it divides the Universe, the All of Being, into two hostile camps, and in doing so introduces the "war of the worlds" into each individual life.

When a fruit-grower plants a fruit-tree, he does three things for it. By choosing an appropriate soil and aspect, he brings adequate supplies of *nourishment* within reach of it. By manuring it at the right season, he both adds to its store of nourishment and gives it the *stimulus* which will help it to absorb and assimilate the nourishment that is immediately available for its use. And, by pruning and training it judiciously, he gives it the *guidance* which will enable it to develop itself to the best advantage from the fruit-bearing point of view (fruit-bearing being the end which *he* sets it). He does these three things for it, but he does no more than these. He realises that in all these operations he is only taking advantage of the innate powers and tendencies of the tree, and enabling these to deploy themselves under as favourable conditions

as possible; and he is therefore well content to leave the rest to the tree itself, feeling sure that its own spontaneous effort to achieve perfection will do all that is needed. His trust in the ability and willingness of the tree to work out its salvation is complete.

These are the lines on which the farmer and the fruit-grower conduct their business,—lines, the neglect of which would involve them in early disaster and in ultimate ruin. And these are the lines on which human nature ought to be trained, in school and out of school, from the day of birth to the day of death. But they are lines on which it will never be trained so long as the doctrine of the depravity of Nature in general and human nature in particular controls our philosophy of life.

The doctrine of natural depravity, or original sin, is the outcome of Man's attempt to explain to himself the glaring fact of his own imperfection. The doctrine grew up in an age when men were ignorant of the fundamental laws of Nature, and among a people who, though otherwise richly gifted, had no turn for sustained thought. So long as men were ignorant of Nature's master law of evolution, it was but natural that they should account for their own imperfection by looking back to a Golden Age,—a state of innocence and bliss from which they had somehow fallen, and to which they could not, by any effort or process of their corrupted nature, hope to return. While this idea —half myth and half doctrine—was growing up in the mind of Israel, the counter idea of the evolution or growth of the soul, of its ascent from "weak beginnings" towards a state of spiritual perfection,

was growing up among the thinkers of India, and the derivative doctrine of salvation through the natural process of soul-growth was being gradually elaborated. But though the philosophy of India produced some impression on the conscious thought, and a far deeper impression on the sub-conscious thought, of the West, its master idea of spiritual evolution—*through a long sequence of lives*—was wholly foreign to the genius of Christendom, which had borrowed its *ideas* from the commonplace philosophy of Israel; and it was not till the nineteenth century of our era that the idea of evolution began to make its way, from the quarter of physical science, into Western thought.

The doctrine of original sin must once have had a meaning and a purpose. For one thing, it must have been generated by a sudden rise in Man's moral standard; and as such it must have had a salutary influence on his conduct and inward life. But it is now outstaying its welcome. The Biblical story of the Fall, in virtue of which it was once authoritatively taught, is ceasing to be regarded as serious history; and the doctrine must therefore either justify itself to critical thought or resign itself to rejection as inadequate and unsound. But there is only one line of defence which its supporters can take. As the doctrine was the outcome of Man's premature attempt to explain the fact of his own imperfection, if it is to survive in the world of ideas it must be able to show, first and foremost, that the fact in question cannot be accounted for on other grounds. Will it be able to do this, at a time when the idea of evolution is beginning to impregnate our mental atmosphere,

and in doing so is making us realise that we are near of kin to all other living things, and that our lives, like theirs, are dominated by the master-law of *growth?*

That there is much moral evil in the world is undeniable. Are we therefore to predicate original depravity of man's heart and soul? But there is also much physical evil in the world,—pain, weakness, disease, decay, and death. Are we therefore to predicate original depravity of man's body? And this physical evil, this liability to disease, is not confined to man, but also affects all other living things. Are we therefore to predicate original depravity of a new-born lamb, of a new-laid egg, of an acorn, of a grain of wheat?

Let us consider certain typical forms of moral evil, and see if we can account for them, without having recourse to the hypothesis of original sin. The vicious propensities which manifest themselves in children and "young persons" may be divided into two main classes, *apparent* and *actual.*[1] Of the former class the chief cause is, in a word, *immaturity*. Of the latter, *environment.*

Analogies drawn from plant life may help us to understand how these causes operate.

Immaturity. If an Englishman who had never before tasted an apple were to eat one in July, he would probably come to the conclusion that it was a hard, sour, indigestible fruit, "conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity," and fit only to be con-

[1] There is of course an intermediate class of vicious tendencies, which may be described as apparent rather than actual, and which are caused partly by immaturity, partly by environment. Many of the "naughtinesses" of school children belong to this class.

signed to perdition (on a dustheap, or elsewhere). But if the same man were to wait till October and then eat an apple from the same tree, he would form a wholly different conception of its value. He would find that the sourness had ripened into wholesome and refreshing acidity; the hardness into that firmness of fibre which, besides being pleasant to the palate, makes the apple "keep" better than any other fruit; the indigestibility into certain valuable dietetic qualities; and so on. It is the same with the growing child. *Most of his vices are virtues in the making.* During the first year or so of his life he is a monster of selfishness; and selfishness is the most comprehensive and far-reaching of all vicious tendencies. Does this mean that he has been conceived in sin? Not in the least. It means that he is making a whole-hearted effort to guard and unfold the potencies of life—in the first instance, of physical life—which have been entrusted to him. It means that he has entered the path of self-realisation, and that if he will be as faithful to that path during the rest of his life as he has been during those early months of uncompromising selfishness, he will be able at last to scale the loftiest heights of self-forgetfulness and self-sacrifice.

Environment. The influences which environment exerts seem to fall under three heads—

(1) General influences of a more or less permanent character, such as home, neighbourhood, social grade, etc.

(2) General influences of a more or less variable character, such as education, employment, friendship, etc.

(3) Particular influences, such as companionship (good or bad), literature (wholesome or pernicious), places of amusement (elevating or debasing), special opportunities for self-sacrifice or self-indulgence, etc.

Corresponding to these in plant-life we have—

(1) Soil, situation, and climate:

(2) Cultivation and weather:

(3) The various insects and micro-organisms which are ready to assail or protect growing life.

(1) If two acorns from the same tree were sown, the one in a deep clay soil and a favourable situation, the other in a light sandy soil and an unfavourable situation, the former would in time develop into a large and shapely, the latter into a puny and misshapen oak-tree. It would be the same, *mutatis mutandis*, with two human beings who were exposed from their earliest days to widely different permanent influences.

(2) If wheat of a certain strain were sown on the same day in two adjoining fields, one of which was well farmed and the other badly farmed, the resulting crops would differ widely in yield and value. It would be the same with two human beings, one of whom (to take a pertinent example) attended a school of Utopian tendencies, and the other a school of a more conventional type. Of all moralising (or demoralising) influences education is by far the most important, owing to the fact that it can do more, and is in a position to do more, than any other influence either to foster or to hinder growth.

The influence of weather on plant-life is, of course, enormous. In one year the fruit-crop in a given neighbourhood is a failure: in another year

it gluts the market. One explanation of this fact, which has its exact analogies in human life, will be given in the next paragraph.

(3) All forms of life are exposed to the attacks of enemies of various kinds. Whether they shall beat off those attacks or succumb to them depends in large measure on the nature of the growth that they are making; and this again depends, largely if not wholly, on the nature of the general influences to which they have been exposed. For many years I lived in a district in which hops were grown on a large scale; and I naturally took an interest in the staple industry of my adopted county. I noticed that whenever (during the summer months) there came a spell of cold winds from the north-east—winds which tend to arrest plant-growth—the hop-bines were at once assailed by blight and other pests, and the safety of the growing crop was imperilled. And I noticed further that when the wind got round to the south-west, and warm showers began to stimulate the growth of the flagging plants, the pests that had assailed them disappeared as if by magic, and the anxieties of the growers were relieved. As it is with plants, so it is with human beings. They too have their enemies,—temptations of various kinds and other evil influences that "war against the soul." And they too will be able to beat off their assailants just so far as their own growth is vigorous and healthy; and will succumb to their attacks, to their own serious detriment, just so far as their own growth is feeble and sickly.

The bearing of this fact on the problem of the origin of moral evil is obvious. That the evils

which assail the organism, be it a plant or a human being, are not inherent in its nature, is proved by the fact that when the growth of the organism is normal and unimpeded, the assailants are always beaten off. As it is the growth of the organism—the development of its own *nature*—which enables it to resist the evils that threaten it, we must assume that its nature is good. Indeed the evils that threaten it are called evils for no other reason than that they imperil its well-being; and it follows that in calling them evils we imply that the organism is intrinsically good.

When we have eliminated from human nature the vicious tendencies which are due either to immaturity or to the numberless influences that come under the general head of environment, we shall find that a very small percentage remain to be accounted for. We need not have recourse to the doctrine of original sin in order to account for these. So far I have said nothing about *heredity*, partly because its influence on the moral development of the individual is, I think, very small compared with that of environment, and partly because it is impossible to consider the extent and character of its influence, without going deeply into certain large and complicated problems. For example, it would be impossible for me to say much about the current, though gradually waning, belief in the force of heredity, without saying something about its Far Eastern equivalent, the belief in re-incarnation,—in other words, without asking whether a man inherits from his parents and other ancestors, or from his former selves. That different persons are born with widely different moral tendencies and

propensities, is as certain as that some strains of wheat are hardier and more productive than others. And it is possible, and even probable, that there are exceptional cases of moral evil which point to congenital depravity, and cannot otherwise be accounted for. But in these admissions I am making no concession to the believer in original sin; for he regards human nature *as such* as congenitally depraved, and therefore can take no cognisance of exceptional cases of congenital depravity, cases which by breaking the rule that the new-born child is morally and spiritually healthy, may be said to prove it.

In fine, then, all moral evil can be accounted for on grounds which are quite compatible with the assumption that the *normal* child is healthy, on all the planes of his being, at the moment of his birth. That he carries with him into the world the capacity for being affected by adverse influences of various kinds, is undeniable; but so does every other living thing; and if congenital depravity is to be predicated of him for that reason, it must also be predicated of every new-born animal and plant.

But the final proof that Man is by nature a child of God, is one which has already been hinted at, and will presently be further developed,—namely, that growth—the healthy, vigorous growth of the whole human being, the harmonious development of his whole *nature*—is in its essence a movement towards moral and spiritual perfection. And the final proof that the doctrine of Man's congenital depravity is false is the practical one that the doctrine is ever tending to fulfil its own gloomy predictions, and to justify its own low estimate of

human nature,—in other words, that by making education repressive and devitalising, by introducing externalism, with its endless train of attendant evils, into Man's daily life, and by making him disbelieve in and even despair of himself, it has done more perhaps than all other influences added together to deprave his heart and to wreck his life.

To one who has convinced himself that human nature is fundamentally good, in the sense that the new-born child is as a rule sound and healthy on all the planes of his being, it must be clear that the path of soul-growth or self-realisation is the only way of salvation. What salvation means, what the path of self-realisation will do for him who enters it, is a theme to which I could not hope to do justice within the limits of this work. I will therefore content myself with indicating certain typical aspects of the process which I have called self-realisation, and saying something about each of these. Four aspects suggest themselves to me as worthy of special consideration,—the *mental*, the *moral*, the *social*, and the *religious*.[1]

The Mental Aspect of Self-realisation.

There are two features of the process of self-realisation, on the importance of which I cannot

[1] The *physical* aspect is, of course, of incalculable importance. My only reason for ignoring it is that I am not competent to deal with it. The *æsthetic* aspect is also of incalculable importance; but I know so little about music or art, that I must limit my treatment of this aspect to pointing out that until the musical and artistic instincts of the masses are systematically trained in our elementary schools, through the medium of free self-expression on the part of the children, we shall have neither a national music nor a national art.

insist too often or too strongly. The first is that the growth which the life of self-realisation fosters is, in its essence, harmonious and many-sided. The second is that the life of self-realisation is, from first to last, a life of self-expression, and that self-expression and perception are the face and obverse of the same mental effort.

If the life of self-realisation did not provide for the growth of the self in its totality, the self as a living whole, it would not be worthy of its name. One-sided growth, inharmonious growth, growth in which some faculties are hypertrophied and others atrophied, is not self-realisation. When trees are planted close together, as in the beech-forests of the Continent, they climb to great heights in their struggle for air and light, but they make no lateral growth. When trees are pollarded, they make abundant lateral growth, but they cease to climb upward. When trees are exposed to the prevailing winds of an open sea-coast, they are blown over away from the sea, and make all their growth, such as it is, on the landward side. When trees are on the border of a thick plantation, they make all their growth towards the open air, and are bare and leafless on the opposite side. In each of these cases the growth made is inharmonious and one-sided: the balance between the two intersecting planes of growth, or between the two opposite sides, has been lost. But when a tree is planted in the open, and when all the other conditions of growth are favourable, it grows harmoniously in all directions,—upward, outward, and all around. In other words, it is growing as a whole, growing, as it ought to grow, through every fibre

of its being, and yet maintaining a perfect symmetry of form and the harmony of true proportion among its various parts.

This is the kind of growth which the soul makes in the life of self-realisation; and if it falls appreciably short of this standard, if it develops itself on this side or that, to the neglect of all other sides, then we must say of it that, though it is realising this or that faculty or group of faculties, it is not realising itself. I have spoken of the six great expansive instincts which indicate the main lines of the child's natural growth, and I have shown that in Utopia the cultivation of all those instincts is duly provided for. In the life of self-realisation the soul would continue to grow on the lines which those instincts had marked out for it. I do not mean that when the child goes out into the work-a-day world, he must give to all six instincts the systematic training which they received, or ought to have received, in school. The exigencies of the daily round of life are such as to make that impossible, in all but the most exceptional cases. But that is all the more reason why the expansive instincts should be carefully and skilfully trained in school. For where they are so trained, an impetus is given to each of them which will keep it alive and active long after the direct influence of the school has ceased, and will enable it to absorb and assimilate whatever nutriment may come in its way. If the Utopian training cannot be followed up, in its entirety, in the child's after-life, it can at least initiate a movement which need never be arrested,—a movement in the direction of the triune goal of Man's being, the goal towards which his

expansive instincts are ever tending to take him, the goal of Love, Beauty, and Truth.

The life of many-sided growth is also a life of self-expression. This means that the self-expression, like the growth which it fosters, is many-sided; and this again means that the perceptive faculties, which unfold themselves through the medium of self-expression, are not so much separate faculties as a general capacity for getting on terms with one's environment and gaining an insight into its laws and properties. In a school which lays itself out to teach one or two subjects thoroughly, to the neglect of others, a *sense,* or special perceptive faculty, will gradually be evolved by the study of each subject, provided, of course, that the path of self-expression is followed,—a literary sense, a historical sense, a mathematical sense, and so on. But while these special senses are being developed, the remaining perceptive faculties are being starved, and no attempt is being made to cultivate that general capacity of which I have just spoken. The consequent loss to the child, both in his school-life and in his after-life, is very great. For not only is his mental growth one-sided and inharmonious, but even in the subjects in which he specialises he will lose appreciably, owing to his special perceptive faculties not having as their background any general capacity for seeing things as they are.

I will try to explain what I mean. In what is known as "Society" there is a valuable quality called "tact," in virtue of which the man or woman who is endowed with it always says and does "the right thing." This quality is compounded partly of sympathetic insight into the feelings, actual and

possible, of others, and partly of a keen and subtle sense for all the *nuances* of social propriety. Like every other perceptive faculty, it is the outcome of self-expression,—of years of self-expression on the plane of social intercourse. That general perceptive faculty, or perceptive capacity, which is the outcome of years of self-expression on many sides of one's being, has so much in common with the *tact* of the man of society, that the epithet *tactful* may perhaps be applied to it. The larger, like the lesser, faculty is compounded, partly of sympathetic insight into latent possibilities, and partly of a delicate sense for *nuances* of all kinds. But even this formula does less than justice to its complex nature. Generated as it is by a life of many-sided self-expression, it reflects its origin in its internal constitution. Many elements of thought and feeling have woven themselves into it; and it is ready to take a colour from each new environment or even from each new situation. It can become emotional, for example, when the matter in hand appeals, in any sort or degree, to the emotions; and there are occasions when its latent sense of humour becomes an invaluable antidote to that over-seriousness which so often leads men astray. Above all, it is in its essence, imaginative, for it is ever learning to picture things to itself as they are or as they might be; and the higher the level and the wider the sphere of its activity, the more boldly imaginative it becomes. A faculty so subtle and so sympathetic must needs play a vitally important *rôle*, not only when its possessor is studying "subjects" or handling concrete problems, but also, and more especially, when he is dealing with the "affairs of

life"; and we can understand that when it is wholly or largely lacking, each of the special faculties which specialising is supposed to foster will suffer from not being tempered and yet vitalised by its all-penetrating influence.

That we may the better understand this, and the better understand what the path of self-realisation does for the mental development of him who walks in it, let us ask ourselves what type of mind the conventional type of education is likely to produce. And let us study the conventional type of education on what is supposed to be its highest level. Let us consider the education given to the *sons* of the "upper classes." And let us take this highest level at its own highest level. Let us take the case of those who go through that tri-partite course of education which begins in a high-class "Preparatory School," is continued in one of the "Great Public Schools," and is completed at Oxford or Cambridge. A boy enters a Preparatory School at the age of eight or nine, and is there prepared, in general for entrance into one of the Great Public Schools, and in particular for one of the competitive examinations on the results of which the entrance scholarships of the Great Public Schools are awarded. He enters one of the Great Public Schools at the age of thirteen or fourteen, and is there prepared, in general for admission to Oxford or Cambridge, and in particular for the scholarship examinations of the various Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. He enters Oxford or Cambridge at the age of eighteen or nineteen, and is there prepared, directly for his degree examination—"Pass" or "Honours" as the case may be—and

indirectly for the public examination which admits to the Indian and Colonial, and the higher grades of the Home, Civil Service. This course of education lasts about fourteen years, and costs from £1,500 to £4,500.

What will it do for the boy who goes through it? The education given in the Preparatory School is completely dominated by the scholarship and entrance examinations at the Great Public Schools. The lines on which those examinations are conducted are the lines on which the Preparatory Schoolmaster must educate his pupils. He has no choice in the matter. The title "Preparatory" seals his doom. His business is, not to give his pupils the education that is best suited to their capacities and their years, but to prepare them for admission to a more advanced school. The more scholarships he can win at Eton, Harrow, Winchester, Rugby, and the rest, the higher will be the repute of his school; and as the competition between school and school is fierce and unintermittent, he cannot afford to throw away a single chance. In other words, he cannot afford to make a single serious experiment. The education given in the Great Public Schools is similarly dominated by the scholarship and entrance examinations held by the Oxford and Cambridge Colleges. The lines on which those examinations are conducted are in the main the lines on which the boys must be educated. It is possible that the Great Public Schools are freer to go their own ways than are the Preparatory Schools; but if they are, they make but little use of their freedom.

So far as the rank and file of the boys are con-

cerned, it may be doubted if the word "educative" is applicable, in any sense or degree, to the daily round of their work. Of the six great expansive instincts which are struggling to evolve themselves in every healthy child, not one can be said to find a congenial soil or a stimulating atmosphere in the ordinary classroom either of the Preparatory or of the Public School. Four of the six—the *dramatic*, the *artistic*, the *musical*, and the *constructive*—are entirely or almost entirely neglected. Music and Handwork[1] are "extras" (a fatally significant word); the teaching of Drawing is, as a rule, quite perfunctory; and Acting is not a recognised part of the school curriculum. The truth is that marks are not given for these "subjects"—for in the eyes of the schoolmaster they are all "subjects"—in any entrance or scholarship examination, and that therefore it does not *pay* to teach them. There remain two instincts,—the *communicative* and the *inquisitive*. The study of the "Humanities"—History and Literature, ancient and modern—ought to train the former; and the study of Science ought to train the latter. But in the case of the average boy, the study of the Humanities resolves itself, in the main, into a prolonged and unsuccessful tussle with the difficulties of the Greek and Latin languages, the mastering of which is regarded as an end in itself instead of as the gateway to the wonder-worlds of ancient life and

[1] Workshops, for the use of the engineering classes, are, I believe, attached to the "Modern Side" of some of our Great Public Schools; but I doubt if there is one among the Great Public Schools, or even among the Preparatory Schools which lead up to them, in which "hand-work" is part of the *normal* curriculum.

thought; and the study of Science is, as a rule, a pure farce.[1] Not one, then, of the expansive instincts of the average boy receives any training during the nine or ten years of his school life; and as, in his struggle for the "Pass" degree of his University, he will follow the lines on which he has been accustomed to work in both his schools, he will go out into the world at the age of twenty-two or twenty-three, the victim of a course of education which has lasted for fourteen years and cost thousands of pounds, and which has done nothing whatever to foster his mental or spiritual growth. It is true that in all the Public Schools a certain amount of informal education is done through the medium of Musical Societies, Natural History Societies, Debating Societies, School Magazines, and the like; that the discipline of a Public School, with its system of School and House prefects, has considerable educational value; that the playing fields do something towards the formation of character; that the boys, by exchanging experiences and discussing things freely among themselves, help to educate one another; and that during the four months of each year which the schoolboy spends away from school, he is, or may be, exposed to educative influences of various kinds.[2] But the

[1] I know a youth who recently attended Science lectures for two years at one of the most famous of our Great Public Schools, and at the end of that time had not the faintest idea what branch of Science he had been studying. Science is, I believe, seriously taught in the Great Public Schools to those who wish to take it seriously; but, if taught at all, it is certainly not taught seriously to the rank and file of the boys who belong to the "Classical side" of their respective schools.

[2] See also footnote 2 to page 270.

broad fact remains that the *studies* of the youthful graduate, whether in school classroom or college lecture-room, have been wholly unformative and therefore wholly uneducative.

But let us consider the education given in our Public Schools and Universities, at what is presumably the highest of all its levels. Let us see what is done for the boys who have sufficient ability to win Scholarships and read for Honours at Oxford and Cambridge. It is to the supposed interests of these brighter boys that the vital interests of their duller schoolfellows are perforce sacrificed. Are the results worth the sacrifice? The brighter boys fall into two main groups,—those who have a turn for the "Humanities," and those who have a turn for Mathematics and Science. Where the "Humanities" are effectively taught,—where, for example, the scholar is allowed to pass through the portals of Latin and Greek grammar and composition into the wonder-world that lies beyond them,—the *communicative* instinct receives a valuable training. It is, unfortunately, quite possible for a boy, or even for a man, to be what is called a "good scholar," and yet to take no interest whatever in the history or literature of Greece and Rome; and the examination system undoubtedly tends to foster this bastard type of humanism. But when, as a result of his school and University training, a scholar has passed the linguistic portals and found pleasure in the worlds beyond, we may say of him that his education has fostered the growth of *one* of his expansive instincts,—perhaps the most important of all, but still only one. When Science is effectively taught, the growth of the *inquisitive* instinct is similarly

fostered; but the inquisitive instinct, though of great value, when trained in conjunction with other instincts, has but little value as a "formative" when trained by itself. From this point of view it compares unfavourably with the communicative instinct, being as much less formative than the latter, as the mysteries of the material world are less significant and less able to inspire and vitalise their interpreter than the mysteries of human life; and a purely (or mainly) scientific training is therefore worth far less as an instrument of education than a purely (or mainly) humanistic training.

But why should the boys at our Great Public Schools and the young men at our Universities have to choose between a scientific and a humanistic training? Why should these ancient and famous institutions be content to train one only of the six expansive instincts instead of at least *two?* Here, as elsewhere, the scholarship system blocks the way. Some scholarships are given for Classics, others for History, others for Mathematics, others for Natural Science. Not a single scholarship is given, at either University, for general capacity, as measured by the results of a many-sided examination. Why should this be? The answer is that under any system of formal examination many-sidedness in education necessarily means *smattering;* and that against smattering the Universities have, very properly, set their faces. But, after all, there is no necessary connection between many-sidedness and smattering. In Utopia, where the concentric rings of growth are formed by the gradual evolution of an inner life, whatever feeds that inner life is a contribution, however humble, to the growth of the whole tree; and many-sided-

ness, far from being a defect, is one of the first conditions of success in education. But in the Great Public Schools, where veneers of information are being assiduously laid on the surface of the boy's mind with a view to his passing some impending examination, the greater the number and variety of such veneers, the more certain they all are to split and waste and perish. Indeed the real reason why specialising has to be resorted to in the case of the brighter boys, is that in no other way can provision be made for the fatal process of veneering being dispensed with, and for faculty being evolved by growth from within.

But a heavy price has to be paid for the growth of these specialised faculties. If Science is to be seriously studied the student must give the whole of his time to it. This means that he must give up the idea of educating himself. It is only by turning his back on history, on literature, on philosophy, on music, on art, that he can hope to meet the exacting and ever-growing demands which Science makes on those who desire to be initiated into its mysteries. To say that when he has "taken his degree" he is only half-educated, is greatly to over-estimate the formative influence of his highly specialised training. A sense has undoubtedly been developed in him, an instinct has been awakened, one or two of his mental faculties have been vigorously cultivated; but his training has been the reverse of humanising; and as his studies and his consequent attitude towards Nature have been essentially *analytical*, he may, in the absence of those correctives which his compulsory specialising has withheld from him, have learned to regard the dead side of things as the real side,—a conception

which, if it mastered him, would materialise his whole outlook on life.

The case of the "humanist" is different. The subjects which he studies appeal to many sides of his being; and if he could respond to their appeal, they might do much for his mental and spiritual development. That he should be able to respond to their appeal is of vital importance. When he has become a decent "scholar," a chance is given to him, which if he neglects he will probably lose for ever,—the chance of making good, in part at least, the deficiencies of his early education. Had he lived in Utopia, his life of many-sided self-expression would have given a general training to his perceptive faculties, in which the twin faculties of imagination and sympathy would have had their share. But neither in his Preparatory School nor in the lower classes of his Public School has any serious attempt been made during school hours to ripen either of those mighty faculties, whereas much has been done in both schools to retard their growth. He is doomed, then, to begin his study of the history and literature of the Ancient World with a considerable knowledge of the Latin and Greek languages, but (in too many cases) with an unimaginative mind and an unsympathetic heart. There is, however, much in that history and that literature,—not to speak of the history and the literature of his own and other modern countries,—which, if it could but have its way, would appeal strongly to his imagination and his sympathy, dormant and undeveloped as these faculties are,—appeal to them so strongly as to awaken them at last from their slumber and quicken them into active life. But

alas! the shadow of an impending examination is always falling on his humanistic studies, nullifying the appeal that they make to him, and compelling him to look at them from a sordidly utilitarian point of view. For to give marks for the response that he might make to their appeal, or even to set questions which would afford free scope for the play of his imagination or the flow of his sympathy, is beyond the power of any examiner. There are two things, and two only, which "pay" on the examination day, —the possession of information and the power to make use of it; and the humanist who would win prizes at his school or gain high honours at his University, must therefore regard the memorable doings and the imperishable sayings of his fellow-men, not as things to be imagined and felt, admired and loved, wondered at and pondered over, but as things to be pigeon-holed in his memory, to be taken out and arranged under headings, to be dissected and commented on and criticised.[1]

Of the part that memory plays in the education of our humanist, I need not speak. An undue burden is probably laid upon it; but that is a matter of minor importance. What is of supreme importance is that in cultivating his critical faculty with an almost intensive culture, while they starve, or at any rate leave untended, his more vital and more emancipative faculties of imagination and sympathy, our Great Public Schools and Universities

[1] When I was an undergraduate at Oxford, there was one at least of my friends who took a genuine delight in the literary masterpieces of Greece and Rome,—the delight, not of a fastidious scholar but of a born lover of good literature. He got a "Third" in Classical "Mods," and was "gulfed" in "Greats." "Serve him right," his "dons" must have said, for I am afraid he cut their lectures. *ὡς ἀπόλοιτο καὶ ἄλλος ὅστις τοιαῦτά γε ῥέζοι.*

are doing him a serious and lasting injury. Let us take the case of a young man of energy and ability who has just left Oxford or Cambridge, having won high honours in one of the humanistic "schools." Let us assume that, like so many of his kind, he has a keenly critical mind, but is deficient in imagination and sympathy; and let us then try to forecast his future. That the faith of his childhood, undermined by his criticism, has already fallen to pieces or will shortly do so, is more than probable. That he will be too unimaginative to attempt to construct a new faith out of the ruins of the old, is practically certain. His lack of faith, in the broader sense of the word, will incapacitate him for high seriousness (which he will regard as "bad form"), and *a fortiori* for enthusiasm (which he will shun like the plague), and will therefore predispose him to frivolity. Being fully persuaded, owing to his lack of imaginative sympathy, that his own outlook on life is alone compatible with mental sanity, and yet being too clear-sighted to accept that outlook as satisfactory, he will mingle with his frivolity a strain of bitterness and discontent,—the bitterness of self-corroding scepticism, and the discontent which grows apace through its very effort to ignore its own existence. In a word, his attitude towards life will be one of *cynicism*,—that blend of hardness and bitterness with frivolity which exactly inverts the ideal of the modern poet, when he dreams of an age in the far-off future,

> Which without hardness will be sage,
> And gay without frivolity.[1]

And the bitterness of his cynicism will be made

[1] *Stanzas on the Grande Chartreuse*, by Matthew Arnold.

bitterer still by the fact that, owing to his being (in all probability) unmusical, inartistic, and unable to amuse himself with any form of handwork, he will have no taste or hobby to distract him from himself. For a time, indeed, the "genial sense of youth" will keep his sinister tendencies in check; and in the middle period of life, his struggle to achieve "success"—for of course he will be an externalist to the core—will tend to keep them in the background. But in his later years, when he will have either failed to achieve "success" or discovered—too late—that it was not worth achieving, his cynicism will assert itself without let or hindrance, and, with his growing incapacity for frivolity, will become harder and bitterer, till at last the dark shadow of incurable pessimism will fall on him and involve his declining years in ever deepening gloom. I do not say that many of our University humanists will conform to this type; but I do say that the type is easily recognisable and is becoming increasingly familiar.

Even the intellectual development of our humanist, who is nothing if not intellectual, will be adversely affected by the onesidedness of his education. Well-informed and acutely critical he will probably be; but he will lack the saving grace of that "tactful" faculty which years of many-sided self-expression can alone evolve,—a faculty which (as we have seen) is subtly adaptive when it deals with small matters, boldly imaginative when it deals with great matters, and delicately sympathetic along the whole range of its activity. This sinuous and penetrative sense is to the more logically critical faculty what equity is to law; and in its

absence the intellectuality of our young "intellectual" will be as incomplete as would be the legal system of a country which knew nothing of equity and tried to bring all legal problems under the direct control of positive law. For it will be his business, as he goes through life, to deal in and with words and phrases; and as words and phrases are ever tending to change their force, and even their meaning, under our hands, and as his use and treatment of them will be logical and "legal" rather than tactful and "equitable," he will again and again misinterpret and misuse them, and will so do badly the very thing which he is expected to do well. The man who, though endowed with an acute and vigorous intellect, can neither think imaginatively nor reason tactfully, has grave intellectual defects; and the blinder he is to the existence of these defects the more pronounced will they become.

The pity of it is that when these unimaginative "intellectuals" go out into the world, they will fill posts in which they will have unrivalled opportunities for establishing and disseminating their unwholesome influence. A section of them will go into the teaching profession, the higher grades of which are almost entirely recruited from Oxford and Cambridge. Another section will go into the legal profession, and through it will enter Parliament in considerable numbers, where, being trained advocates, they will exercise an influence out of all proportion to their numerical strength. And a third section will man the higher grades of the Home, Colonial, and Indian Civil Services. Teachers, legislators, administrators,—if there are any walks in life in which cynicism and a capacity

for merely destructive criticism are out of place, and in which imagination and sympathy are imperatively demanded, they are these three; and it is nothing short of a national calamity that these great and commanding professions should be manned, in part at least, by men whose mission in life is to paralyse rather than to vitalise, to fetter rather than to set free.

The further pity of it is that the training of these "intellectuals" might easily have taken an entirely different course. Much of the specialising which goes on in our Great Public Schools and Universities, and which is so destructive of mental and spiritual vitality, is wholly unnecessary. The course of education which the sons of the "upper classes" go through has this in common with elementary education, that in neither case need "utilitarian" considerations weigh with the teachers. The parents of a large proportion of our Public School boys can afford to give their sons a *liberal* education (in the truest and fullest sense of the word) up to the age of twenty-two or twenty-three; and in the case of these boys, at any rate, the excessive specialisation which makes their education so illiberal is done, not in response to the demands of professions (such as the medical or the engineering) which necessitate early specialising, but solely in response to the demands of an examination system which we adopted before we had begun to ask ourselves what education meant, and which, partly from the force of habit and partly because it is in keeping with our general attitude towards life, we still bow down before with a devotion as ardent and as irrational as that which

inspired the cry of "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." [1]

At its best, then, the education given by the Great Public Schools and Universities fosters the growth of one of the expansive instincts,—the *communicative*, a mighty instinct which opens up to imagination and sympathy the whole wide world of human life; but because it leaves all the other expansive instincts untended, it gives that one instinct an inadequate and unsymmetrical training, a training which checks the growth of the very faculties—imagination and sympathy—of which the instinct is largely compounded and for the sake of which it may almost be said to exist. At its second best, this costly education fosters the growth of the *inquisitive* instinct,—a grandly expansive instinct when trained in conjunction with the others, but one which is constrictive rather than expansive when trained by itself and for its own sake. At its ordinary level, it trains no instinct whatever, and is therefore unworthy of the name of education. Why should this be so? Why should a course of education which lasts so long and costs so much do so little for its victims, and do that little so badly or, at any rate, so inadequately? Because from first to last it has looked outward instead of inward: because it has laboured unceasingly to produce "results," and has never given a thought to growth.[2]

[1] When I apply the epithet "irrational" to the outcry at Ephesus, I am thinking of the mob, not of the silversmiths. The latter knew what they were about.

[2] Having said so much in disparagement of the mental training given in the great Public Schools and the older Universities, let me now try to make my peace with my old school and my

Let us now go to the other end of the social scale. What the path of self-realisation might do for the children of the "upper classes" if they were allowed to follow it, we may roughly calculate, partly by measuring what the alternative scheme of education has failed to do for them, partly by reminding ourselves of what the path has done for the village children of Utopia. The children of the "upper classes" have such an advantage over the children of Utopia in the matter of environment,—to say nothing of inherited capacity,—that one would expect the path to do much more for their mental development than it has done for the mental development of the Utopians, especially as they could afford to remain much longer in the first and most important of its stages, the stage of self-education (in the more limited sense of the word). The gain to the whole nation if the mental development of

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University by expressing my conviction that those who are studying the "Humanities," whether at school or college, *and finding pleasure in their studies*, are receiving the best education that is at present procurable in England. An old Oxonian may perhaps be allowed to make public profession of his faith in the special efficacy of that course of study which is known familiarly as "Greats," the examination in which is, of all examinations, the most difficult to cram for and the most profitable to read for.

It is scarcely necessary for me to add that in the older Universities, as in the great Public Schools, many valuable educative influences are at work outside the lecture-room. For one thing, the undergraduates, who come from all parts of the world, are always educating one another. For another thing, the "atmosphere" of Oxford and Cambridge does much for the mental and spiritual development of those who are able to respond to its stimulus. Even the *genius loci* is educative, in its own quiet, subtle way. But it would be an impertinence on my part to labour this point. It is because Oxford and Cambridge educate their *alumni* in a thousand ways, the worth of which no formal examination can test or measure, that they stand apart from all other Universities.

the highest social stratum could be raised as much above its normal level as the mental development of youthful Utopia has been raised above the normal level of an English rural village, would be incalculably great. But greater still—incalculably greater—would be the gain to the nation if the rank and file of its children could be led into the path of self-realisation, and therein rise to the high level of brightness, intelligence, and resourcefulness which has been reached in Utopia.

Nor is this dream so wildly impracticable as some might imagine. So far as the natural capacity of the average child is concerned, there is no bar to its realisation. Egeria has taught me that the mental capacity of the average child, even in a rustic village belonging to a county which is proverbial for the slow wits of its rustics, is very great. It is sometimes said that of the children who have been trained in our elementary schools, not one in twenty is fit to profit by the education given in a secondary school: and if by this is meant that in nineteen cases out of twenty the elementary scholar, *educated as he has probably been,* is unlikely to profit by the education given in a secondary school, *conducted as those schools usually are,* I am not prepared to say offhand that the statement is untrue. But if it means that the average mental capacity of the children of our "lower orders" is hopelessly inferior to that of the children of our middle and upper classes, I can say without hesitation that it is a slander and a lie. Whether there is any difference, in respect of *innate* mental capacity, between level and level of our social scale, may be doubted; but the Utopian

experiment has proved to demonstration that in the lowest level of all the innate mental capacity is so great that we cannot well expect to find any considerable advance on it even in the highest level of all.

But where, it will be asked, are we to find Egerias to man our elementary schools? For the moment this problem does not admit of a practical solution. But that need not discourage us. I admit that in far too many of our schools the teachers, through no fault of their own, are what I may call machine-made, and that they are engaged in turning out machine-made scholars, some of whom in the fullness of time will develop into machine-made teachers. But there is a way of escape from this vicious circle,—the path of self-realisation. That path has transformed the children of a rustic village in a slow-witted county into Utopians. Why should it not transform some at least among the boys and girls who are thinking of entering the teaching profession into Egerias, or at any rate into teachers of Egeria's type? Even as it is, replicas of Egeria,—not exact replicas, for she is too original to be easily replicated, but teachers who, like her, preach and practise the gospel of self-education,—are beginning to spring up in various parts of the country; and each of their schools, besides being a centre of light, may well become a nursery for teachers who will follow in the footsteps of those who have trained them, and will in their turn do pioneer work in other schools. The thin end of the wedge is even now being driven into the close-grained mass of tradition and routine; and each successive blow that is struck by

a teacher of intelligence and initiative will widen the incipient cleft.

The dream, then, of leading the children of England—the children of the "masses" as well as of the "classes"—into the path of self-realisation, is not so widely impracticable as to convict the dreamer of insanity. And if we could realise the dream, if we could go but a little way towards realising it, how immense would be the gain to our country! If the average level of mental development in England were as high as it is in Utopia, to what height would not the men and women of exceptional ability be able to rise? The mountain peaks that spring from an upland plateau soar higher towards the sky than the peaks, of the same apparent height, that spring from a low-lying plain. And "the great mountains lift the lowlands on to their sides."

But this is not the only reason why the gospel of self-realisation should be preached in all parts of the land. There is another reason which is becoming more and more urgent. If the Utopian scheme of education were widely adopted, an antidote would be found to a grave and growing evil which is beginning to imperil the mental health of every civilised community, and of this more than any other. The more civilised (in the Western sense of the word) a country becomes, the less educative does life—the rough-and-tumble life of the work-a-day world—tend to become. In a thoroughly "civilised" country, where the material conditions of life are highly organised, and where industry is highly specialised, so much is done for the individual by those who organise his life and

labour, that it ceases to be necessary for him, except within narrow limits, to shift for himself. In a less civilised community men have to use their wits as well as their hands at every turn; and resourcefulness and versatility are therefore in constant demand. The industrial life of a Russian peasant, who is of necessity a Jack-of-many-trades, is incomparably more educative than that of the Lancashire cotton operative, most of whose thinking and much of whose operating may be said to be done for him by the complicated machinery which he controls; who does, indeed, learn to do one thing surpassingly well, but in doing that one thing becomes, as he progresses, more and more automatic, so that the highest praise we can give him is to say that he does his work with the sureness and accuracy of a machine. It follows that the more civilised a country becomes, the more important is the part that the elementary school plays in the life of the nation,—and that not merely because the ability to read, write, and cipher is, in the conditions which modern civilisation imposes, almost as much a "necessary of life" as the ability to walk or talk, but also and more especially because it devolves upon the school to do for the citizen in his childhood what life will not do for him in his manhood, or will do for him but in scant measure, to stimulate his vital powers into healthful activity, to foster the growth of his soul. And the more the people in a civilised country are withdrawn from the soil and herded into mines and mills and offices, the more imperative is it that the school should quicken rather than deaden the child's innate faculties, should bring sunshine

rather than frost into his adolescent life. In such a country as ours the responsibilities of the teacher are only equalled by his opportunities; for the child is in his hands during the most impressionable years of life; and those years will have been wasted, and worse than wasted, unless they have fitted the child to face the world with resourcefulness, intelligence, and vital energy, ready to wrest from his environment, by enlarging and otherwise transforming it, those educative influences which are still to be had for the seeking, but are no longer automatically supplied.

The Moral Aspect of Self-Realisation.

If Man, if each man in turn, is born *good,* the process of growth, or self-realisation, which is presumably taking him towards the perfection of which his nature admits, must needs make him continuously *better.* In other words, growth, provided that it is healthy, harmonious, and many-sided, provided that it is growth of the whole being, is in itself and of inner necessity the most moralising of all processes. Nay, it is the only moralising process, for in no other way can what is naturally good be transformed into what is ideally best.

This argument, apart from its being open to the possible objection that it plays on the meaning of the word "good," is perhaps too conclusive to be really convincing. I will therefore try to make my way to its conclusion by another line of thought.

The desire to grow, to advance towards maturity, to realise his true self—the self that is his in embryo from the very beginning—is strong in every living thing, and is therefore strong in every child of

man. But the desire, which necessarily takes its share in the general process of growth, must needs pass through many stages on its way to its own highest form. In infancy, it is a desire for physical life, for the preservation and expansion of the physical self; and in this stage it is, as I have already pointed out, uncompromisingly selfish. The new-born baby is the incarnation of selfishness; and it is quite right that he should be so. It is his way of trying to realise himself. As the child grows older, the desire to grow becomes a desire for self-aggrandisement,—a desire to shine in various ways, to surpass others, to be admired, to be praised; and though in this stage it may give rise to much vanity and selfishness, still, so long as it has vigorous growth behind it and is in its essence a desire for further growth, it is in the main a healthy tendency, and to call it sinful or vicious would be a misuse of words.

But when, in the course of time, the average, ordinary, surface self—the self with which we are all only too familiar—has been fully evolved and firmly established, the day may come when, owing to various adverse conditions, the growth of the soul will be arrested, and the ordinary self will come to be regarded as the true self, as the self which the man may henceforth accept and rest in, as the self in virtue of which he is what he is. Should the desire for self-aggrandisement survive that day, the door would be thrown open to selfishness of a malignant type and to general demoralisation. And this is what would assuredly come to pass. In the first place, the desire for self-aggrandisement, which always has the push of Nature's expansive

forces behind it, would certainly survive that ill-omened day. Indeed, it were well that it should do so; for "while there is life, there is hope," and when the soul is ceasing to grow, it is through the desire for self-aggrandisement that Nature makes her last effort to keep it alive, by compelling it to energise on one or two at least of the many sides of its being. In the second place, the desire would gradually cease to be resolvable into the desire for continued growth, and would gradually transform itself into the desire to glorify and make much of the ordinary self, to minister to its selfish demands, to give it possessions, riches, honour, power, social rank, and whatever else might serve to feed its self-esteem, and make it think well of itself because it was well thought of by "the world." And in the third place, in its effort to glorify and make much of the ordinary self, the desire would, without a moment's compunction, see other persons pushed to the wall, trampled under foot, slighted and humiliated, robbed of what they valued most, outraged and wounded in their tenderest feelings. It is my firm conviction that at the present day three-fourths of the moral evil in the world, or at any rate in the Western world, are the direct or indirect outcome of egoism,—egoism which, as a rule, is mean, petty, and small-minded, but is often cruel and ruthless, and can on occasion become heroic and even titanic in its capacity for evil and in the havoc that it works,—egoism which in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred is generated by the desire for self-aggrandisement having outlived its better self, the desire to grow.

If arrested growth is the chief source of

malignant egoism, there is an obvious remedy for the deadly malady. The egoist must re-enter the path of self-realisation. His great enemy is his lower self;[1] and the surest way to conquer this enemy is to outgrow it, to leave it far behind. When the path of self-realisation has been re-entered, when the soul has resumed the interrupted process of its growth, the desire for self-aggrandisement will spontaneously transform itself, first into the desire for further growth, and then into the desire for outgrowth or escape from self, and will cease to minister to the selfish demands of the lower self; and as the lower self is all the while being gradually left behind by the growing soul, and is therefore ceasing to assert itself, and ceasing to clamour, like a spoilt child, for this thing and for that,—it will not be long before the antidote to the poison of egoism will have taken due effect, and the health of the soul will have been restored.

But let me say again—for I can scarcely say it too often—that the growth which emancipates from self is many-sided growth, the growth, not of any one faculty, or group of faculties, but of the soul as such. Were it not so, the life of self-realisation might easily become a life of glorified and therefore intensified selfishness. It is quite possible, as we know from experience, for a high degree of "culture" to co-exist with a high degree of egoism. It is possible, for example, for the æsthetic instincts, when not kept aglow by the sympathetic, or hardened with an alloy of the scientific, to

[1] I mean by the "lower self," not the animal base of one's existence, but the ordinary self *claiming to be the true self*, and so rising in rebellion against its lawful lord.

evolve a peculiar form of selfishness which leads at last to looseness of life and general demoralisation. And it is possible for the scientific instincts, when developed at the expense of the æsthetic and the sympathetic, to evolve a hard, unemotional type of character which is self-centred and selfish owing to its positiveness and lack of imagination. But these are instances of inharmonious growth. When growth is harmonious and many-sided, it leads of necessity to out-growth, to escape from self. For the expansive instincts are so many ways of escape from self which Nature opens up to the soul;—the sympathetic instincts, a way of escape into the boundless æther of love; the æsthetic instincts, a way of escape into the wonder-world of beauty; the scientific instincts, a way of escape into the world of mysteries which is lighted by the "high white star of truth." It is only when one of the expansive instincts is allowed to aggrandise itself at the expense of the others, that the consequent outgrowth of selfishness in what I may call the internal economy of one's nature begins to reflect itself in a general selfishness of character. An instinct may readily become egoistic in its effort to affirm or over-affirm itself, to grasp at its share or more than its share of the child's rising life: and if it does, it may gradually suck down into the vortex of its egoism the whole character of the child as he ripens into the man. But growth, as such, is anti-egoistic just because it is growth, because it is a movement towards a larger, fuller, and freer life: and it is restricted, even more than one-sided growth,—it is the apathy, the helplessness, the deadness of soul that overtakes, first the child

and then the man, when his expansive instincts are systematically starved and thwarted,—which is the chief cause of his incarceration in his petty self.

If three-fourths of the moral evil in the world are due to malignant egoism, the source of the remaining fourth is, in a word, *sensuality*. By sensuality I mean the undue or perverted development of the desires and passions of the animal self, —the desire for food and drink, the sexual desires, the desire for physical or semi-physical excitement, the animal passion of anger, and the rest. As an enemy of the soul, sensuality is less dangerous, because more open and less insidious, than egoism. The egoist, who mistakes his ordinary for his real self, may well lead a life of systematic selfishness without in the least realising that he is living amiss. But the animal self is never mistaken for the real self; and the sensualist always has an uneasy feeling in the back of his mind that, in indulging his animal desires and passions to excess, he is doing wrong. This feeling may, indeed, die out when he "grows hard" in his "viciousness"; but in the earlier stages of the sensual life it is sure to "give pause"; and there are, I think, few persons who do not feel that the sensual desires and passions are so remote from the headquarters of human life, that in yielding to them beyond due measure they are acting unworthily of their higher selves. At any rate we may regard the temptations to sensual indulgence that lie in our path as evil influences which are assailing us from without rather than from within; and we may therefore liken them to the blight, rust, mites, mildew, and other pests

that assail hops, fruit, wheat, and other growing plants.

And, like the pests that assail growing plants, the sensual pests that war against the soul must be beaten off by vigorous and continuous growth. No other prophylactic is so sure or so effective as this. When I was asked whether the Utopian education was useful or not, I adduced, as an instance of its usefulness, its power of protecting the young from the allurements of a pernicious literature, to which the victims of the conventional type of education, with their lowered vitality and their lack of interest in life, too readily succumb. This is a typical example of the way in which the rising sap of life strengthens the soul to resist the temptations to undue sensual indulgence by which it is always liable to be assailed. The victim of a repressive, growth-arresting type of education, having few if any interests in life, not infrequently takes to the meretricious excitements of sensuality in order to relieve the intolerable monotony of his days. But the training which makes for many-sided growth, by filling the life of the "adolescent" with many and various interests, removes temptations of this particular type from his path. And it does more for him than this. It generates in him a state of health and well-being, in which the very vigour and elasticity of his spiritual fibre automatically shields him from temptation by refusing to allow the germs of moral disease to effect a lodgment in his soul. It would be well if our moralists could realise that the chief causes of weakness in the presence of sensual temptation are, on the one hand, boredom and *ennui*, and on the other hand

flabbiness and degeneracy of spiritual fibre, and that the remedy for both these defects is to give the young the type of education which will foster rather than hinder growth.

We are now in a position to estimate the respective values, as moralising influences, of the path of self-realisation and the path that leads to "results." Whatever tends to arrest growth tends also and in an equal degree to demoralise Man's life; for, on the one hand, by transforming the healthy desire for continued growth into the unhealthy desire for mere self-aggrandisement, it generates malignant egoism, with its endless train of attendant evils; and, on the other hand, by depressing the vitality of the soul and so weakening its powers of resistance, it exposes it to the attacks of those powers and desires which we speak of in the aggregate as sensuality. If this is so, the inference is irresistible that the externalism of "civilised" life, with the repressive and devitalising system of education which it necessitates, is responsible for the greater part of the immorality —I am using the word in its widest sense—of the present age. Contrariwise, whatever tends to foster growth tends also, and in an equal degree, to moralise Man's life; for, on the one hand, by transforming the desire for self-aggrandisement into the desire, first for continued growth and then for out-growth, it gives the soul strength to eliminate the poison of egoism from its system; and, on the other hand, by vitalising the soul and so strengthening its powers of resistance, it enables it to beat off the attacks of those enemies of its well-being which serve under the banner of sensu-

ality. If this is so, the inference is irresistible that self-realisation is the only effective remedy for the immorality of the present age.

The comparison between the two schemes of life may be carried a stage further. If egoism and sensuality are the two primary vices, the secondary vices will be the various ways and means by which egoism and sensuality try to compass their respective ends. Let us select for consideration one group of these vices,—the important group which fall under the general head of *untruthfulness*. Insincerity, disingenuousness, shiftiness, trickery, duplicity, chicanery, evasion, intrigue, *suppressio veri, suggestio falsi,* fraud, mendacity, treachery, hypocrisy, cant,—their name is Legion. That externalism, whether in school or out of school, is the foster-mother of the whole brood, is almost too obvious to need demonstration. In school the child lives in an atmosphere of unreality and make-believe. The demand for mechanical obedience which is always pressing upon him is a demand that he shall be untrue to himself. Sincerity of expression, which is the fountain-head of all truthfulness, is not merely slighted by his teacher, but is systematically proscribed. He is always (under compulsion) pretending to be what he is not,—to know what he does not know, to see what he does not see, to think what he does not think, to believe what he does not believe. And he lives, from hour to hour, under the dark shadow of severity and distrust,—severity which is too often answered by servility, and distrust which is too often answered by deceit. When he goes out into the world, he finds that though there are many sins

for which there is forgiveness, there is one for which there is no forgiveness,—the sin of being found out; and he orders his life accordingly. He finds that he must give account of himself to public opinion, which necessarily judges according to the appearance of things, and is only too ready to be hoodwinked and gulled. He finds that to "succeed" is to achieve certain outward and visible results,—results which are out of relation to the *vraie vérité* of things, which are in no way symbolical of merit, and for the winning of which any means may be resorted to provided that scandals are avoided and the letter of the law is obeyed. He finds that the system of advertising which plays so large a part in modern life, and without which it is so hard to "succeed," is in the main a system of organised mendacity. Finally, and above all, he finds that the examination system, with its implicit demands for trickery and shiftiness, and its almost open invitation to cram and cheat, is not confined to the school but has its equivalent in "the world," and is in fact the basis of civilisation as well as of education in the West.

This is the provision that externalism makes for the practical inculcation of truthfulness,—a virtue which its religion and its ethics profess to honour above all others. The life of self-realisation, on the other hand, is a life of genuine self-expression; and a life of genuine self-expression is obviously a life of fearless sincerity. In such a life there is no place for untruthfulness or any member of its impish brood. The one concern of the child, as of the man, is to be loyal to intrinsic reality, to be true to his true self. His standard is always

inward, not outward. He knows that he is what he is, not what he is reputed to be. *Quantum unusquisque est in oculis Tuis, tantum est et non amplius.*

Here, then, as elsewhere, we see that the difference between the morality of externalism and the morality of self-realisation is a difference, not of degree but of direct antagonism,—the difference between a poison and its antidote, between the cause of a malady and the cure.

While the path of self-realisation is emancipating us from egoism and sensuality, in what general direction is it leading us? Is its ethical ideal positive or merely negative? And if it is positive, what is its character, and how is it to be realised? The answer to this question will be given in the remaining sections.

The Social Aspect of Self-realisation.

He must either be richly endowed with "the good things of life" or be of an exceptionally optimistic disposition, who can view the existing social order with complete satisfaction. Even among those who are richly endowed with "the good things of life" there must be many who realise that the "Have-nots" have some cause for complaint. And even among those who are of an exceptionally optimistic disposition there must be some who realise that the grounds of their optimism are personal to themselves, and that they cannot expect many others to share their satisfaction with things as they are.

The phrase "the good things of life" is significant, and explains much. It means that an out-

ward standard of reality has fully established itself in the community, that money and the possessions of various kinds which money can buy are regarded as the good things of life,—things which are intrinsically good, and therefore legitimate ends of Man's ambition and endeavour, things to pursue which is to fulfil one's destiny and to win which is to achieve salvation. It means, in other words, that the life of the community is a scramble for material possessions and outward and visible "results"—a scramble which on its lowest level becomes a struggle for bare existence, and on the next level a struggle for the "necessaries of life"—and that this legalised scramble is the basis of the whole social order. In such a scramble the great prizes are necessarily few, and the number of complete failures is always considerable; for the wealthier a country, the higher is its standard of comfort, so that the *proportion* of failures—the percentage of men who are submerged and outcast, who are in want and misery—is at least as great in the wealthiest as in the poorest community, while the extremes of wealth and poverty are as a rule greatest where the pursuit of riches is carried on with the keenest vigour and the most complete success.

There are many persons, rich as well as poor, who, viewing the legalised scramble from an entirely impersonal standpoint, are filled with disgust and dismay, and who dream of making an end of it, by substituting what they call *collectivism* for the individualism which they regard as the source of all our troubles. These persons are known as *Socialists*. Their ruling idea is that the

"State" should become the sole owner of property, and that this radical change should be effected by a series of legislative measures. With their social ideal, regarded as an ideal, one has of course the deepest sympathy. Their motto is, I believe, "Each for all, and all for each"; and if this ideal could be realised, the social millennium would indeed have begun. But in trying to compass their ends by legislation, *before the standard of reality has been changed,* they are making a disastrous mistake. For, to go no further, our schools are hotbeds of individualism, the spirit of "competitive selfishness" being actively and systematically fostered in all of them, with a few exceptions; and so long as this is so, so long as our highly individualised society is recruited, year by year, by a large contingent of individualists of all ranks, drawn from schools of all grades, for so long will the Socialistic ideal remain an impracticable dream. An impracticable and a mischievous dream; for in the attempt to realise it, the community will almost inevitably be brought to the verge of civil war. When the seeds of socialistic legislation, or even of socialistic agitation, are sown in a soil which is highly charged with the poison of individualism, the resulting crop will be class hatred and social strife.

No, we must change our standard of reality before we can hope to reform society. Where the outward standard prevails, where material possessions are regarded as "the good things of life," the basis of society must needs be competitive rather than communal, for there will never be enough of those "good things" to satisfy the desires of *all* the members of any community. And even if the

socialistic dream of state-ownership could be universally realised, the change—so long as the outward standard of reality prevailed—would not necessarily be for the better, and might well be for the worse. Competition for "the good things of life" would probably go on as fiercely as ever; but it would be a scramble among nations rather than individuals, and it might conceivably take the form of open warfare waged on a titanic scale.[1] Even now there are indications that such a struggle, or series of struggles, if not actually approaching, is at any rate not beyond the bounds of possibility. And on the way to the realisation of the collectivist ideal, we should probably have in each community a similar struggle for wealth and power among political parties,—a struggle which would generate many social evils, of which civil war might not be the most malignant.

But if we are to change our standard of reality we must change it, first and foremost, in the school. The way to do this is quite simple. We need not give lessons on altruism. We need not teach or preach a new philosophy of life. All that we need do is to foster the growth of the child's soul. When the growth of the soul is healthy and harmonious, the cultivation of all the expansive instincts having been fully provided for, the *communal* instinct will evolve itself in its own season; and when the communal instinct has been fully

[1] In other words, it might conceivably take the form of *clan* warfare, highly organised and waged on a world-wide field; and we learn from the history of the Highlands of Scotland and of Old Japan that of all forms of warfare the most cruel and relentless, with the exception of that which is waged in the name of religion, is the warfare between clan and clan.

evolved, the social order will begin to reform itself. This is what has happened in Utopia. There, where competition is unknown, where prizes are undreamed of, where the growth of the child's natural faculties, and the consequent well-being of his soul, is "its own exceeding great reward," the communal instinct has grown with the growth of the child's whole nature, and has generated an ideal social life.

At the end of the last section I asked myself what was the ethical ideal of the life of self-realisation,—the positive ideal as distinguished from the more negative ideal of emancipating from egoism and sensuality. I will now try to answer this question. Emancipation from egoism and sensuality is effected by the outgrowth of a larger and truer self. This larger and truer self, as it unfolds itself, directs our eyes towards the ideal self—the goal of the whole process of growth—which is to the ordinary self what the full-grown tree, embodying in itself the perfection of oakhood, is to the sapling oak, or what the ripe peach, embodying in itself the perfection of peachhood, is to the green unripened fruit. The ideal self is, in brief, perfect Manhood. What perfect Manhood may be, we need not pause to inquire. Whatever it may be, it is the true self of each of us. It follows that the nearer each of us gets to it, the nearer he is to the true self of each of his fellow-men; that the more closely he is able to identify himself with it, the more closely he is able to identify himself with each of his fellow-men; that in realising it, he is realising, he is entering into, he is becoming one with, the real life of each of his fellow-men. And

not of each of his fellow-men only. He is also entering into the life of the whole community of men—(for it is the presence of the ideal-self in each of us which makes communal life possible)—and, through this, of each of the lesser communities to which he may happen to belong. In other words, he is losing himself in the lives of others, and is finding his well-being, and therefore his happiness, in doing so. But self-loss, with joy in the loss of self, is, in a word, *love*.

The path of self-realisation is, then, in its higher stages, a life of love. He who walks in that path must needs lead a life of love. He will love and serve his fellow-men, both as individuals and as members of this or that community, not because he is consciously trying to live up to a high ideal, but because he has reached a stage in his development beyond which he cannot develop himself except by leading a life of love, because the path of self-realisation has led him into the sunshine of love, and if he will not henceforth walk in that sunshine he will cease to follow his path. He has indeed long walked in the foreglow of the sunshine of love. The dawn of the orb of love is heralded by a gradual twilight, which lights the path of self-realisation, even in its earlier stages. In Utopia the joy on the faces of the children is the joy of goodwill not less than of well-being. Or rather it is the joy of goodwill because it is the joy of well-being, because well-being would not be well-being if it did not ceaselessly generate goodwill.

That love is "the fulfilling of the law," and therefore the keystone of every sound system of ethics, is a truth on which I need scarcely insist. The final

proof that the ethics of self-realisation are sound to the core lies in the fact that the path of self-realisation, besides emancipating from egoism and sensuality, leads all who walk in it, first into the foreglow and then into the sunshine of love. But it is with the social rather than the ethical aspect of self-realisation that I am now concerned. And the social aspect of the fact which has just been stated is obviously of vital importance. Love, which is commensurate with life, has innumerable phases. One of these is what I have called the communal instinct,—the sense of belonging to a community, of being a vital part of it, of sharing in its life, of being what one is (in part at least) because one shares in its life. If Socialism is to realise its noble dream, this instinct, strongly developed and directed towards the well-being of the whole social order, must become part of the normal equipment of every citizen. And if this is to come to pass, self-realisation must be made the basis of education in all our schools. What it has done for the children of Utopia, in the way of developing their communal instinct and making their school an ideal community, it is capable of doing for every school in England,—I might almost say for every school on the face of the earth.

There are faddists who advocate the teaching of *patriotism* in our elementary schools. There are Local Education Committees which insist on *citizenship* being taught in the schools under their control. By teaching patriotism and citizenship is meant treating them as "subjects," finding places for them on the "time-table," and giving formal lessons on them. Where this is done, the

time of the teachers and the children is wasted. The teaching of patriotism and citizenship, if it is to produce any effect, must be entirely informal and indirect. Let the child be so educated that he will develop himself freely on all the sides of his being, and his communal instinct will, as I have said, evolve itself in its own season. Until it has evolved itself, patriotism and citizenship will be mere names to him, and what he is taught about them will make no impression on him. When it has evolved itself, he will be a patriot and a good citizen *in posse,* and will be ready on occasion to prove his patriotism and his good citizenship by his deeds, or, better still, by his life.[1]

While the communal instinct is evolving itself, first in the school and then in the community at large, the standard of reality will, by a parallel or perhaps identical process, be transforming itself in all the grades of society. The inward will be taking the place of the outward standard; and men will be learning to form a different conception of "the good things of life" from that which now dominates our social life. The Socialist will then have his opportunity. That any member of the community should be in physical want or irremediable misery, will begin to be felt, partly as a personal grief, partly as a reflection on himself, by each member of the community in turn; and steps will begin to be taken—what steps I cannot

[1] There is such a thing as communal egoism, when a man regards the community or society to which he belongs as a kind of "possession," to be paraded and bragged about, just as in personal love there is such a thing as egoism *à deux.* But the communal instinct which is generated by self-realisation readily purges itself of every egoistic taint.

pretend to forecast—to make physical want and irremediable misery impossible. Meanwhile, with the gradual substitution of the inward for the outward standard of reality, the mad scramble for wealth and possessions and distinctions will gradually cease, the conception of what constitutes "comfort" and of what are the real "necessaries of life" will be correspondingly changed, and men will begin to realise that of the genuine "good things of life"—the good things which the children of Utopia carry with them into the world, and which make them exceedingly rich in spite of their apparent poverty—there are enough and more than enough "to go round."

The Religious Aspect of Self-realisation.

The oak-tree is present in embryo in the acorn. What is it that is present in embryo in the newborn child? To achieve salvation is to realise one's true self. But what is one's true self? The "perfection of manhood" is an obvious answer to this question; but it explains so little that we cannot accept it as final. We may, however, accept it as a resting-place in our search for the final answer.

It is on the religious aspect of self-realisation that I now propose to dwell. The function of Religion is to bring a central aim into man's life, to direct his eyes towards the true end of his being and to help him to reach it. The true end of Man's being is the perfection of his nature; and the way to this end is the process which we call growth. When I speak of Man's nature I am thinking of his universal nature, of the nature which is common

to all men, the nature of Man as Man. Each of us has his own particular nature, his individuality, as it is sometimes called. The nature of Man as Man is no mere common measure of these particular natures, but is rather what I may call their organised totality, the many-sided nature which includes, explains, and even justifies them all.

What perfection may mean when we predicate the term of our common nature, we cannot even imagine. The potentialities of our nature seem to be infinite, and our knowledge of them is limited and shallow. When we compare an untutored savage or a brutal, ignorant European with a Christ or a Buddha, or again with a Shakespeare or a Goethe, we realise how vast is the range—the lineal even more than the lateral range—of Man's nature, and we find it easy to believe that in any ordinary man there are whole tracts, whole aspects of human nature, in which his consciousness has not yet been awakened, and which therefore seem to be non-existent in him, though in reality they are only dormant or inert. These, however, are matters with which we need not at present concern ourselves. Let the potentialities of our common nature be what they may. Our business is to realise them as, little by little, they present themselves to us for realisation. Let the end of the process of growth be what it may. Our business is to grow.

In the effort to grow we are not left without guidance. The stimulus to grow, the forces and the tendencies that make for growth, all come from within ourselves. Yet it is only to a limited extent that they come under our direct control. So, too,

the goal of growth, the ideal perfection of our nature, is our own; and yet on the way to it we must needs outgrow ourselves. What part do *we* play in this mighty drama? The mystery of self-hood is unfathomable. The word *sĕlf* changes its meaning the moment we begin to think about it. So does the word *nature*. The range of meaning is in each case unlimited. Yet there are limits beyond which we cannot use either word without some risk of being misunderstood. When we are meditating on our origin and our destiny, some other word seems to be needed to enable us to complete the span of our thoughts.

Is not that word *God?* The source of our life, the ideal end of our being,—how shall we think about these if we may not speak of them as *divine?* And in using the word "divine," do we not set ourselves free to stretch the respective meanings of the words "self" and "nature" beyond what would otherwise have been the breaking point of each? The true self is worthier of the name of "self" than the apparent self. The true nature is worthier of the name of "nature" than the lower nature. But the true self is the Divine Self; and the highest nature is the Nature of God. If this is so, we serve God best and obey God best by trying to perfect our nature in response to a stimulus, a pressure, and a guidance which is at once natural and divine.

In other words, we serve God best by following the path of self-realisation. And the better we serve God, the more truly and fully do we learn to know him. If to know him, and to live up to our knowledge of him, is to be truly religious, then the life

of self-realisation is, in the truest and deepest sense of the word, a *religious* life. Or rather it is the only religious life, for in no other way can knowledge of God be won.

Let me try to make good this statement. Knowledge of God is the outcome, not of definite dogmatic instruction in theology, but of spiritual growth. Knowledge, whatever may be its object, is always the outcome of growth. Even knowledge of *number* is the outcome, not of definite dogmatic instruction in the arithmetical rules and tables, but of the growth of the arithmetical sense. It is the same with literature, the same with history, the same with chemistry, the same with "business," the same with navigation, the same with the driving of vehicles in crowded streets, the same with every art, craft, sport, game, and pursuit. In evolving a special sense, the soul is growing in one particular direction, a direction which is marked out for it by the environment in which it finds it needful or desirable to energise. The soul has, as we have seen, a general power of adapting itself to its environment, of permeating it, of feeling its way through it, of getting to understand it, of dealing with it at last with skill and success. As is the particular environment, so is the subtle, tactful, adaptive, directly perceptive, subconsciously cognitive faculty,—the "sense," as I have called it—by means of which the soul acquires the particular knowledge that it needs. The more highly specialised (whether by subdivision or by abstraction) the environment, the more highly specialised the sense. The larger and more comprehensive the environment, the larger and more "massive" the sense.

The acquired aptitude which enables an omnibus driver to steer his bulky vehicle through the traffic of London is a highly specialised sense. At the other end of the scale we have the "massive" spiritual faculties which deal with whole aspects of life or Nature, such as the sense of beauty or of moral worth.

But there is a sense which is larger and more "massive" even than these. When the environment is all-embracing, when it covers the whole circle of which the soul is or can be the centre, the growth made in response to it is the growth of the soul as such, and the knowledge which rewards that growth is the knowledge of supreme reality, or, in the language of religion, the knowledge of God. The highest of all senses is the religious sense, the sense which gives us knowledge of God. But the religious sense is not, as we are apt to imagine, one of many senses. No one individual sense, however "massive" or subtle it might be, could enable its possessor to get on terms, so to speak, with the totality of things, with the all-vitalising Life, with the all-embracing Whole. *The religious sense is the well-being of the soul.* For the soul as such grows in and through the growth of its various senses,—its own growth being reinforced by the growth of each of these when Nature's balance is kept, and retarded by the growth of one or more of them when Nature's balance is lost,—and in proportion as its own vital, central growth is vigorous and healthy, its power of apprehending reality unfolds itself little by little. That power is of its inmost essence. When reality, in the full sense of the word, is its object, it sees with the whole of its

being; it is itself, when it is at the centre of its universe, its own supreme perceptive faculty, its own religious sense.

If this is so, if the soul in its totality, the soul acting through its whole "apperceptive mass," is its own religious sense, it is abundantly clear that the path of self-realisation is the only path which leads to knowledge of God, and through knowledge of God to salvation. For self-realisation is the only scheme of life which provides for the growth of the soul in its totality, for the harmonious, many-sided development of the soul as such. I have often dwelt on this point. If we have never before realised its importance we must surely do so now. A one-sided training, even when its one-sidedness takes the form of specialising in theology, is a non-religious, and may well become an irreligious training, for it does not lead to, and may well lead away from, knowledge of God.

And if we have never before realised how great are the opportunities and responsibilities of the teacher, we must surely do so now. For a certain number of years—the number varies with the social standing of the child, and the financial resources of his parents—the teacher can afford to disregard utilitarian considerations and think only of what is best for the child. What use will he make of those years? Will he lead the child into the path of self-realisation, and so give a lifelong impetus to the growth of his soul? Or will he, in his thirst for "results," lead him into the path of mechanical obedience, or, at best, of one-sided development, and so blight his budding faculties and arrest the growth of his soul? On the practical answer that

he gives to this question will depend the fate of the child. For to the child the difference between the two paths will be the difference between fulfilling and missing his destiny, between knowledge and ignorance of God.

If any of my readers have imagined that I am an advocate of what is called "secular education," they will, I hope, now realise that they have misread this book. Far from wishing to secularise education, I hold that it cannot be too religious. And, far from wishing to limit its religious activities to the first forty minutes of the morning sessions, I hold that it should be actively religious through every minute of every school session, that whatever it does it should do to the glory of God.

But how does knowledge of God show itself? Knowledge, so far as it is real, always shows itself in right bearing, and (if action is called for) in right action. Knowledge of arithmetic and of other more or less abstract subjects, shows itself in the successful working of the corresponding problems, theoretical or practical as the case may be. Knowledge of the laws of physical nature shows itself in practical mastery of the forces and resources of physical nature. Knowledge of history and geography, in a right attitude towards the problems and sub-problems of these complex and comprehensive subjects, an attitude which may on occasion translate itself into right action. And so on. Knowledge of God, being a state or attitude of the soul as such, must show itself in the right bearing and the right action of the soul as such, in other words, of Man as Man,—not as mathematician, not as financier, not as sculptor, not as

cricketer, but simply as Man. Now Man as Man has to bear himself aright towards the world in which he finds himself, and in particular towards the world which touches him most closely and envelops him most completely,—the world of human life. Therefore knowledge of God will show itself, principally and chiefly, though by no means wholly, in dealing aright with one's fellow-men, in being rightly disposed towards them, and in doing the right things to them. I have found it convenient to disconnect the moral from the religious aspect of self-realisation. We can now see that in the last resort the two aspects are one.

From every point of view, then, and above all from that of Religion, the path of self-realisation is seen to be the path of salvation. For it is the only scheme of life which enables him who follows it to attain to knowledge of God; and knowledge of God has, as its necessary counterpart, a right attitude, in general towards the world which surrounds him, and in particular towards his fellow-men.

But is it possible, within the limits of one earth-life, to follow the path of self-realisation to its appointed goal? And if not, will the path be continued beyond that abrupt turn in it which we call death? The respective attitudes of the two great schools of popular thought towards the problem of the grave, are in brief as follows. The Materialists (or Naturalists, as they miscall themselves) believe that death is the end of life. The Supernaturalists believe that one earth-life (or even a few years or months) of mechanical obedience to supernatural direction will be rewarded by an

eternity of happiness in "Heaven." But those who walk in the path of self-realisation, and whose unswerving loyalty to Nature is rewarded by some measure of insight into her deeper laws, know that the goal of the path is infinitely far away, and in their heart of hearts they laugh both the current eschatologies to scorn. And the higher they ascend, as they follow the path, the more vividly do they realise how unimaginably high above them is the summit of the mountain which the path is ascending in spiral coils.

The Utopian experiment, humble as it is, can, I think, throw some light on these mighty problems. The relations between the type and the various sub-types, between the type and the individual, between the sub-type and the individual—whether in plant or beast or man—are matters which could not be handled within the limits of this book, and which I have therefore as far as possible ignored. Nor have I attempted to deal with the difficult problems that are presented by the existence of races, such as the Negro, which seem to be far below the normal level of human development. There is, however, in the vast region of thought which these and kindred problems open out to us, one by-way which I must be allowed to follow for a while.

The wild *bullace* is, I believe, the ancestor of many of our yellow *plums*. In other words, bullacehood can develop into plumhood, and even into the perfection of plumhood. Similarly human nature can develop into something so high above the normal level of human nature that it might almost seem to belong to another *genus*. But there

is a difference between the two cases. The bullace ideal is in the individual bullace tree. So, in a sense, is the plum ideal. But the latter cannot be realised, or even approached, by the individual bullace tree. It cannot be realised, or even approached, by the bullace species except through a long course of culture and breeding. Is it the same with Man? Let us take English rusticity as a particular type of human nature,—the equivalent of bullacehood for the purpose of argument. This is a distinct type, and may be said to have its own ideal.[1] Emerging from this, and gradually transforming it, is the ideal of human nature, the ideal for Man as Man. As the bullace ideal is to the plum ideal, so is the ideal of English rusticity to the ideal of human nature. But whereas the plum ideal cannot be realised in any appreciable degree by the individual bullace, the human ideal can be realised in a quite appreciable degree by the individual English rustic. There have always been and will always be isolated cases to prove that this is so,—cases of men of quite humble origin who have attained to high degrees of mental and spiritual development. These have hitherto been regarded as exceptional cases. But Egeria has convinced me that under favourable conditions the *average* child can become the rare exception, and attain to what is usually regarded as a remarkably high degree of mental and spiritual development. Innocent joy, self-forgetfulness, communal devotion, heartfelt goodwill, gracious manners—to speak of spiritual development only—are character-

[1] I mean by the "ideal" the true nature of the given species and the true self of each individual specimen.

istics of *every* Utopian child. What are we to infer from this? The bullace ideal is realisable (under favourable conditions) by each individual bullace tree,—but the plum ideal is not. The English rustic ideal is realisable by each individual rustic child. *But so is the human ideal in Utopia.*

But what of the children who do not belong to Utopia? What would have happened to the Utopian children if there had been no Egeria to lead them into the path of self-realisation? They would have lived and died ordinary English rustics, —healthy bullaces, but in no respect or degree plums. Egeria has convinced me that the average child, besides being born mentally and spiritually healthy, has immense capacity on every side of his being. The plum ideal is the true nature of the plum, but is not the true nature of the bullace. But Egeria has convinced me that the human ideal —the divine self—is the true nature of each of us, even of the average rustic child; and she has also convinced me that each of us can go a long way towards realising that ideal. Had there been no Egeria in Utopia, the Utopians would have lived and died undeveloped, having arrived at a maturity of a kind, the maturity of the bullace as distinguished from that of the plum, but having failed to realise in any appreciable degree what the Utopian experiment has proved to be their true nature. What then? Is this the end of the average man? Will Nature admit final defeat? The curve of a man's life, as it sweeps round from birth to death, passes through the point of apparent maturity; but the real nature of the man has never ripened, and when he descends into the grave he is

still the embryo of his true self. Will the true self never be realised? Never, if death is indeed the end of life. But in that case the man will have failed to fulfil the central purpose of Nature, and, alone among her children, will have escaped from the control of her all-pervading law of growth.

It is in their desire to keep Man in line with the rest of Nature's children that so many thinkers and scientists in the West forbid him to look beyond the horizon of the grave. But in truth it is only by being allowed to look beyond that horizon that Man can be kept in line with the rest of Nature's children; for if death means extinction to him, as it means (or seems to mean) to the beetle or the fly, he will have lived to no purpose, having failed to realise in any appreciable degree what every other living thing realises within its appointed limits,—the central tendencies of his being. That a living thing, an average specimen of its kind, should within the limits of a normal life fail completely to realise those potentialities which are distinctive of its real nature,—fail so completely that the very existence of those potentialities might, but for an occasional and quite exceptional revelation, have remained unsuspected,—is entirely at variance with what we know of the ways and works of Nature. Yet failure to realise his true manhood is, outside the confines of Utopia, the apparent lot of nine men out of ten. An entire range of qualities, spiritual and mental, which blossom freely in the stimulating atmosphere of Utopia, and which must therefore exist in embryo in every normal child, fail to germinate (or at best only just begin to germinate) within the lifetime

of the average non-Utopian.[1] The inference to be drawn from these significant facts is that the apparent limits of Man's life are not the real limits; that the one earth-life of which each of us is conscious, far from being the whole of one's life, is but a tiny fragment of it,—one term of its ascending "series," one day in its cycle of years. In other words, the spiritual fertility of the average Utopian child, taken in conjunction with the spiritual sterility of the average non-Utopian child (and man), points to the conclusion which the thinkers of the Far East reached thousands of years ago,—that for the full development of human nature a plurality of lives is needed, which will do for the individual soul what generations of scientific breeding and culture will do for the bullace that is to be transformed into a plum.

This is one lesson which Utopia has taught me. There is another which had also been anticipated by the thinkers of the Far East. If under exceptionally favourable conditions certain spiritual and mental qualities are able to blossom freely in the space of a few years, which under normal conditions would remain undeveloped during a lifetime of seventy or eighty years, may we not infer that there is a directer path to spiritual maturity than that which is ordinarily followed? May we not infer that there are ways of living, ways into

[1] When I compare the average Utopian with the average non-Utopian, I am of course thinking of the "masses," not of the "classes." If the comparison is to have any value, the conditions in the two cases must be fairly equal. Mentally, the "classes" are, on the whole, more highly developed (thanks to their more favourable environment) than the "masses." Spiritually and morally, they are perhaps on a par with them.

which parents and teachers can lead the young, which, if faithfully followed, will allow the potencies of Man's higher nature to evolve themselves with what we, with our limited experience, must regard as abnormal celerity, and which will therefore shorten appreciably Man's journey to his goal?[1] And if there is a directer path to spiritual maturity than that which is ordinarily followed, is not the name for it *Self-realisation?*

I will not pursue these speculations further. But, speaking for myself, I will say that the vista which the idea of self-realisation opens up to me goes far beyond the limits of any one earth-life or sequence of earth-lives, and far, immeasurably far, beyond the limits of the sham eternity of the conventional Heaven and Hell.

But even if there is the fullest provision in Nature (whether by a spiral ascent through a long chain of lives, or by some directer path) for the final development in each individual man of the potencies of perfect manhood, for the final realisation of the divine or true self,—what then? What does it all mean? Why are we to follow the path of self-realisation? What is the purpose of the cycle of existence? There is an answer to this obstinate question,—an answer which explains nothing, and yet is final, in that it leaves nothing to be explained. The expansive energies and desires, to yield to which is our wisdom and our happiness, are ever transforming themselves, as

[1] This was the idea which inspired the Founder of Buddhism, and led him to formulate a scheme of life, in virtue of which he takes rank (as it seems to me) as the greatest educationalist, as well as the greatest moralist, that the world has ever known.

we yield to them, into the might and the ardour of Love. And for love there is no final resting-place but the sea of Divine Love from which it came. "*Amor ex Deo natus est, nec potest nisi in Deo requiescere.*"

THE END

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